FUN FOLK AND FAIRY TALES

FOR BOYS AND GIRLS

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FUN FOLK AND FAIRY TALES

National Association of Junior Chautauquas

Fun Folk and Fairy Tales

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
EDMUND VANCE COOKE

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Introduction

A GOOD story is its own excuse for being —and for telling. A lot of good stories multiply the validity of the excuse in exact proportion to their number.

The way to tell a good story is to start right in and tell it. No hemmings and hawings, no clearings of the throat or twiddling of the thumbs, no apologies and no introductions. Not even a "One-two-three- go!" as a signal. Just go.

"Why, then, this introduction?" asks the reader, and the writer answers "Why?"

For these are good stories, tried stories, tested stories, stories which have been approved by the boys and girls for whom they were written and that is the highest authority of all. They have been approved not by one child here and a group there, but by a multitude of boys and girls extending from further than Dan and beyond Beersheba.

Perhaps it has not been sufficiently remarked that the most extensive story-telling and story-hearing group in the world is in the modern Chautauqua, unless some of us are vastly mis-

taken. Every summer week of every year the brown tops of the Chautauqua tents spring up like mushrooms in thousands of towns and leave them only to reappear in other thousands. Every day in each of these tents, the children gather about the Junior Leader and listen to stories garnered from every quarter of the earth. Does it not seem that if a story passes the guard and stands the test of these active little elemental minds, mustered from avenue and alley and from practically every Main Street on the continent, that it must have universal appeal?

Well, then, these are those stories! Or some of them.

They were compiled not from books and magazines and libraries, but from live, personal contact, from the story-telling experiences of a host of Junior Leaders.

These are the sponsors of this collection, the compilers of the book. They have not written it or created it. They are not, so to speak, the mothers of the stories, but they are the loving aunts who have brought them up, who have proudly introduced them to a world of playmates and admirers and who now give them a warm word and a loving pat upon the shoulder and send them out, as a group, to continue the

work for others which they have singly and signally, as well as severally, performed for their sponsors.

Our thanks are due to this sponsorship. After all, what is the tale without the telling? And if the teller realizes the deep need of the child nature for stories and supplies it, what is the limit of our gratitude?

Children need stories. They demand them. If they do not get them in one form, they will get them in another, frequently in some form not entirely desirable.

If miracles were possible, probably the most inspiring manner of story hearing would be to begin at the birth, to hear them from the lips of the authors of all ages at the times the stories were first told. Next best, and wholly divorced from the miraculous, is to hear the stories at the family fireside, told by father and mother, a practice which once existed widely and which was of as much benefit to parents as to children. But to-day, let us confess it with regret, father and mother are more apt to take or send the children to the movies for their stories and surely it is sometimes suspected that the stories do not always fit their youthful appetites and needs.

The older generation is forgetting the fine

art of listening and the younger generation sometimes seems to be unaware that such an art ever existed. To be sure, here, perhaps, the radio is correcting the influence of the screen, yet both of them are too feverishly evanescent ever to take the place of the printed page, nor has either of them the warmth and personality of a story as it falls from the lips of a good comrade.

The radio and the movie are like the steam-radiator. No one can find fault with the thermal units supplied, but the warmth does not quite strike home. The story told by living, loving lips to some intimate group is like the warm glow of the open fire-place, which has an exquisite charm which everybody can feel though none, perhaps, may be able to define.

It is believed that these stories have something of that fireside feeling and the wide experience of the compilers in the actual telling of these tales testifies to that effect.

EDMUND VANCE COOKE.

Foreword

SEVERAL hundred thousand "citizens of Junior Town" have heard these stories under big brown tents of Chautauqua. Thus they come as new but tried stories. One can easily imagine the eager faces of the groups in several thousand towns. The Mayor and Commissioners of Junior Town have held their town meeting,—playing at citizenship, and before the citizens go to their games the Junior Chautauqua Leader repeats these selected stories, chosen from the whole available library of children's tales. Now the leader has the biggest opportunity of the day's program, the story is the high light in the morning's vivid experience; to all it is a real and living thing.

Children get from precept and exhortation even less than do adults,—which is perhaps nothing. In the best chosen stories children live with the good,—with those persons (fairies, mythical figures, or real people) who embody what we would inculcate. In such stories the children get the beginning and the end, the cause and the effect of an act, a thought, or a decision, as they will seldom get them in life. It generally takes too long, or too much insight for us to know the sequence. What the drama

and the novel are to adults such stories are to children, a setting forth of life in its relation. As in the drama and in the novel there are unwholesome and pernicious influences in stories for children. But a wholesome story need not be uninteresting. Indeed, if the story is uninteresting it must be because it is poorly told.

The members of the National Association of Junior Chautauqua Directors who have selected these stories from those which their workers have loved to tell and which children have loved to hear, wish to share them with the many busy people who earnestly seek for the best stories. The group is planned to fill programs for five or six story hours. Here are serious or purposeful stories, with a nonsense tale to balance the atmosphere and a folk or fairy tale to meet the demand of those who are at the fairy tale age. From the group may be built a cycle of stories, one balancing the other in a program, and each story program fitting into a complete plan for consecutive story hours. It is the hope of the Directors that the children who hear these stories may hear them well read and well told, as they deserve to be.

PAUL M. PEARSON,
Chairman National Junior
Chautauqua Committee.

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THE Committee of the National Association of Junior Chautauqua Directors which has selected these stories wish to acknowledge the generous help of their associates who have so faithfully submitted the stories which they have tested, tried and found best.

Acknowledgment is here given to the publishers who have granted permission for stories to be reprinted:

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I

THE GUDEMAN OF BALLENGEICH

By Elizabeth W. Grierson

ONE summer evening, somewhere about the year 1535, an honest working man, named John Howieson, was busily engaged threshing corn in a barn at the farm of Braehead, near the little village of Cramond, which lies some four miles from the city of Edinburgh.

It was hard work, and John was tired, for he had not a threshing mill to help him, as he would have had had he lived in our days, so he was obliged to spread the corn out on a sheet on the hard floor of the barn, and beat it with a curious whip of jointed wood, called a flail, until the chaff was separated from the grain.

As he paused in his work, and wiped the dust from his heated forehead, he was thinking rather ruefully of his small earnings and of the many mouths at home that needed to be filled.

"Were I but the owner of a farm like this, how happy I would be," he muttered; then he

laughed at himself for thinking such useless thoughts, and picking up his flail, again prepared to go on with his work.

At that moment the sound of angry voices and the clash of arms caught his ear. Evidently some one was fighting on the high road, which passed close to the barn, and he ran out to see what was going on.

In those days it was such a common occurrence for people to have fights on the King's highway, that it was little thought of, and on an ordinary occasion John would simply have stood still and watched the outcome of the fray, but today he rushed forward to help. For he liked to see fair play and this was a case of five against one.

A party of wandering gypsies, wild, rough-looking men, had met a solitary wayfarer, and had tried to beg from him. On being refused, they had set on him with all their might, and were like to knock him down, and perhaps even kill him, in spite of the fact that he was armed with a short sword, which he was using full manfully, and that he had a certain advantage over them in having his back firmly planted against the low wall of Cramond Brig, a narrow bridge that spanned a little stream called the Almond, which ran into the Forth.

In spite of his bravery, however, the stranger was evidently becoming exhausted. Blood was flowing from a wound in his temple, and his sword-strokes were becoming weaker. Without a moment's hesitation, honest John Howieson sprang to his help, and, swinging his flail high above his head, he laid about him with such right goodwill, that before five minutes had passed, all the gypsies had fled.

"'Thou camest in the nick of time, my friend," exclaimed the wounded man, leaning against the wall, and smiling at the countryman with such a merry smile on his blood-stained face, that John's heart went out to him at once. "By my troth, an' if thou hadst not been at hand, methinks these rascals would e'en have beaten the life out of me."

"'Tis not safe for a man of quality to be so far from the city at this hour alone," answered John gravely, glancing at the speaker's jerkin and hose, which, although they were plain in fashion and quiet in colour, were so fine in texture that they marked their wearer as a person of some note; "but we waste time talking here. If thou wilt come with me to the barn, I will fetch a pail of water from the burn to wash the dust and blood from thy face."

The stranger was only too glad to accept the countryman's offer; and when his wounds had been bathed, and some of the dust of the encounter brushed from his clothes, he felt quite refreshed again, and turned to set out to walk back to Edinburgh.

But John would not let him go alone. "No, no," he said, "once in one day is quite enough to have a set-to with wandering loons like these. Besides, brave as thou art, thou are shaken and exhausted, and would be no fit match for any newcomers thou mightest chance to meet. So I will set thee to within sight of the city boundary, if thou wilt bear with the company of a plain man like myself."

So they set out, and, as they walked along, the stranger asked John many questions as to his name, and his family, and his employment in life. All of which honest John answered truly.

He told him how he was but a poor man, and had to work hard to earn a pittance, and how he had a family of small children at home.

His companion listened in silence, and then he turned to him with a curious smile. "Ah, my friend," he said, "thy lot in life seems to be somewhat hard. Suppose for a moment that thou couldst have a magic wishing cap,

what lot wouldst thou desire to have instead of it?"

John Howieson stood still and scratched his head. "'Tis an impossible wish," he said, "and I am foolish ever to think of it, but I oft-times amuse myself by dreaming how happy I would be were the farm of Braehead mine, and I could work on my own land, and keep what I made for my family, instead of having to slave all day to put money into other people's pocket."

"And whom doth the farm belong to?" asked the stranger.

"To his Majesty the King, up at Holyrood yonder," said John. "Not that I have anything against his Majesty. 'Tis his underlings who grind the faces of us poor."

Then, as if ashamed to be caught grumbling, he turned the conversation into another channel, by asking in his turn, his companion's name and occupation.

"I live at the place thou hast spoken of," answered the stranger lightly. "Up at Holyrood yonder. But I am quite a humble personage; folk call me the Gudeman of Ballengeich, and I hold but a poor office at the Court."

"But thou must see the King at times, and speak with him mayhap," said John, gazing

with awestruck wonder at his companion, who, however humble his appointment might be, was living under the same roof with the King's most sacred Majesty.

"Oh, aye," said the Gudeman of Ballengeich, laughing, "King James gives me 'Goodday' whiles in passing. He's a civil-spoken man, and I trow he tried to be a good master, although some of the auld lords and barons give him credit for but little sense. Wouldst like to see the Palace?" he went on.

"Would I no'?" answered honest John. "'Twould be a proud day for me could I tell my cronies at the farm that I, plain John Howieson, had set foot within the King of Scotland's palace."

"Come up to Holyrood on Sunday next, and give my name to the guard at the gate," said the stranger, "and I will see that thou art admitted."

Accordingly on the next Sunday afternoon, John dressed himself in his best suit of douce gray homespun, and presented himself, all trembling with excitement, at the gate of the Palace. He almost expected to be refused admittance, but it was evident that some orders had been given, for no sooner did he state his errand than he was conducted to a small room

overlooking an inner courtyard, where his friend of four days ago was waiting for him.

"I have permission to take thee through the Palace," said he, after a friendly greeting had passed between them; and to John's great delight, he led him through every part of the enormous building, and showed him the embroidered hangings, and the furniture, and the coffers that had come all the way from France, and the curiously wrought armour in the armoury, and the great, dimly lighted Abbey Church, with its jeweled ornaments, and its rich stained-glass windows.

It was all so grand, and so wonderful, and so different from anything that John had ever seen before, that he never noticed that, although his guide was so plainly dressed (he wore the selfsame suit which he had worn when they first met), all the stately lackies who stood like sentinels at the end of the narrow passages, and at the top of the winding staircase, and who wore the Royal liveries, greeted him with low bows and every mark of respect, or, if he did notice it, it was with simple wonder that such magnificent-looking fellows should condescend to bow to a gentleman, who, although he lived in the Palace, was evidently in a very humble position, seeing he was not ashamed to

be seen in the company of such a plain man as himself.

When at last they had finished their tour of inspection, and John had seen everything he wanted to see, he put on his gray bonnet, and prepared to take his leave, after expressing his thanks for the great treat that his new friend had given him.

But the Gudeman of Ballengeich had still another, and a more wonderful, proposal to make.

"'Tis a pity to have seen so much without seeing all," he said. "Wouldst like to catch a glimpse of King James himself?"

"Me to see the King myself!" repeated honest John, his sunburnt face turning a dull red at the thought. "Aye, by my troth that I would, if thou couldst manage it for me, without getting thyself into trouble, or letting the fine folk here see what an unmannered booby I am."

"There is no fear of that," said his companion, with a twinkle in his eye, "for, as I have told you, his Majesty is a civil-spoken man, and desires that his loyal subjects should ever have free access to him, even though they be but plain bodies like you and me."

"But how shall I know him?" asked the

countryman, half delighted, half frightened at the prospect in front of him.

"That is an easy matter," said the Gudeman of Ballengeich, "for he will wear his bonnet, while all the rest of the company will be uncovered." So saying, he opened the door of a great hall, and walked quietly in, followed by John, who was so abashed at the crowd of finely dressed people among whom he found himself, that he scarce dare lift his eyes from the floor. But his companion seemed quite at ease, and moved about from one to another, talking gaily, while John kept quite close to him, plucking up courage to cast curious glances around him, and take notice of the magnificent suits of brightly coloured silk and satin worn by the nobles, and the quaint costumes of the little page-boys who stood silently waiting by the windows, ready to run a message if they were bidden.

At last he pulled his companion's doublet. "'Tis all very fine," he whispered, "but where is the King? Thou saidst that he would wear his bonnet, and all the grand folk here be uncovered."

The Gudeman of Ballengeich broke into a hearty laugh. "By my faith, but methinks thou speakest truly," he said, glancing round

the room with a merry eye, "it seems to me, my friend, that either you or I must be the King of Scotland, for we alone wear our bonnets."

A terrible fear came into honest John Howieson's mind—"Was it possible that this plainly dressed man could be the King?" He had heard strange stories told of how King James loved to roam about in disguise, but he had never believed them. What if they were true after all? And what if he could be punished for his presumption in thus coming to Holyrood?

"My Liege," he stammered, pulling off his own gray cap with trembling fingers, and falling on his knees before his mysterious acquaintance. "I did not know— I could not guess— I crave thy pardon if I have been too familiar—"

The King asked him to rise and told him he had done nothing for which he need to crave pardon. As a reward for what he had done King James gave to honest John Howieson the farm of Braehead that stood near the little village of Cramond.

II

THE WHITE ELEPHANT

By Mary Stewart

"LONG live the Sacred White Elephant of India!" cried the priests. "May his glory never fail!"

In a temple in India, in front of an enormous ivory elephant, a company of gorgeously robed priests were kneeling. In the courtyard behind them, separated from the inner temple by a golden gate, hundreds of men and women worshipped.

"We bring Thee presents of the first-fruits of our gardens!" they cried. "Bless our harvests, cure our children, accept our gifts!"

Then the gates were opened and the presents were handed to the priests. There were fine, fresh melons, juicy peaches, baskets of purple grapes, besides piles of money in copper, silver and gold.

These gifts were offered to the Elephant and

From *Tell Me a Story I Never Heard Before*, by Mary Stewart. Copyright by Fleming H. Revell Company, New York.

after he had gazed at them with his unseeing turquoise eyes they were supposed to be given to the poor people who lived at the other end of the city.

After the crowds marched out of the temple singing:

"Bless us, White Elephant,
And bless our harvests!"

the priests turned and—winked at one another! Then they gazed at the offerings, rubbing their hands with glee at the large amount, divided them into equal parts and took them home to keep for themselves!

They thought no one was looking, for of course the Elephant could not see; They forgot the little black boy, Nicky, who was hired to stay awake all night and guard the sacred Elephant. He slept in the daytime, in a little room beside the inner temple, and while the priests were dividing the money he was peeking out, watching everything.

He winked also, not at the priests, but at the Elephant, and although no one else saw it the turquoise eye of the Elephant winked back at him!

It was growing dark when the priests left the temple and hurried to their homes. As soon as they had left, Nicky crept out and stood upon

his head in front of the Elephant. Then the Elephant, the Sacred Ivory Elephant of India, —picked Nicky up with his trunk, and standing upon his hind legs he danced around the temple!

"Oh, did you hear them?" cried Nicky. "There are lots of hungry children crying for food and those hateful old priests took everything for themselves!"

"Never mind, I'll punish them!" cried the Elephant. "They don't know I ever come alive and I'll scare them out of their wits. But first take off the horrible sacred garments they have hung upon me—as though I were a towel rack!"

Nicky pulled off the golden blanket embroidered with diamonds, the net of pearls and rubies which hung over the Elephant's head, the golden ear-rings set with emeralds and the larger rings incrusted with many jewels which encircled his huge feet.

"Well, now I feel better!" cried the Elephant, taking a few dance steps. Then he winked his blue eye again at Nicky and exclaimed:

"Let's go and find those priests, let's frighten them out of their wits and let's—oh, let's give them a cold shower!"

With his trunk he threw the delighted black boy upon his back and marched out of the inner temple, across the courtyard,—filled with gorgeous flowers,—through the great silver gates of the temple itself. It was a nice dark night, the kind of night when everything smells perfectly delicious, but you cannot see more than the gleam of the fragrant flowers through the darkness. The White Elephant might have been mistaken for a large cow by any passerby.

The priests were having a wonderful feast. Roasted peacocks, ostrich pie, fruits and cakes and wines covered the long table. The guests were roaring with laughter, cracking jokes about the offerings which they had stolen and drinking more wine than was good for them. Suddenly the curtain at the end of the room was thrust aside and there stood—the White Elephant himself!

The priests dropped their goblets upon the pavement where they broke into a thousand fragments, their mouths fell open, their eyes nearly popped out of their heads, and with shrieks of terror they fell flat upon their faces on the floor.

"Sacred White Elephant, Lord of the City, Power of India, what wilt thou?" they cried.

For a moment there was silence, except for

the kicking heels of the priests who were grovelling upon the ground.

"He does not answer because we know what he seeks!" cried one priest.

"Yes, yes!" they all screamed, "he has come for the offerings! Forgive us! Forgive us, and we will restore them all. Every coin, every drop of fruit shall be given to the poor. Only do, do leave us or we shall die of fright!"

When the Elephant entered through the priests' garden he had stopped beside a pool there to fill his trunk. His answer now was to squirt that same water over them! It was like bucketfuls of melting ice. They shivered and squealed and when they were thoroughly soaked the Elephant gave a prance of delight, which shook the room until the table laden with food upset upon the floor. Then he was satisfied, he nodded at Nicky, who sat upon his back, and trotted off!

"Oh, that was fun!" cried Nicky as they hurried back to the temple. "What shall we do next full moon, White Elephant?"

For the night of the full moon was the only time that the Elephant really came alive. When the moon began to grow he was able to wink at Nicky, wave his tail in the air and wriggle his trunk. Not till the moon was full could he

speak and walk, but Nicky knew that he was always there even when he couldn't play with him and he adored him and counted the nights until their parties.

Then they did have the most splendid times! They generally went to the jungle and played with the monkeys. Sometimes when it was hot, the Elephant carried Nicky to a lake upon the top of a mountain, where they dove and swam and were cool as cucumbers. Once they went as far as the sea, and the Elephant carried the boy far out upon the silver path which the moon sheds there. And the stories he told, and the secrets,—it is a great thing to have a White Elephant for a friend!

"I am worried about the hundreds of children in this city," said the Elephant, as he jogged across the temple courtyard, after he had punished the priests. "They will get plenty of food now from my offerings, I am sure of that," and he gave a chuckle. "But this is pretty hot weather for children and I don't believe they have any fun. There is nowhere for them to bathe except in that mudhole outside the city, is there?"

"No, and it is full of broken glass and tin," said Nicky. "The children's feet are all cut up from them."

"Let's take the children with us the next time we go on a party!" exclaimed the Elephant. "You gather them together and tell them it is a secret and then—oh, won't we have fun?"

Both he and Nicky danced around the temple-court in glee and then, as the sun was rising, they hurried back to their places. Nicky put the Elephant's precious robe and head-dress in place and fastened the golden rings. Then curling up between the animal's fore feet he was soon sound asleep.

It seemed to Nicky that the night of the Elephant's next awakening would never come. Every morning before he had his day's sleep after the night of watching he ran through the narrow streets of the city telling the children to meet him behind the temple the next full moon. There was a path there which led right into the forest, and that was the way he and the White Elephant always started when the night was clear and they might be seen.

The night arrived—a beautiful clear night when the full moon flooded the world with silver. And the Elephant—never had he been so gay, so fascinating!

He danced around the temple so that Nicky could hardly take off the sacred ornaments.

"We are going to have the best time!" he cried as he turned the emerald door-knob of the back door with his trunk.

Out into the forest he stepped and the children were there in flocks, waiting, little brown-skinned mites with dull eyes.

"Come, youngsters!" shouted the Elephant, and for a moment the children were frightened. They crouched back against the trees until they saw the smallest child shout with glee as the Elephant lifted him in his trunk and placed him upon his back.

"Pick us up; take us that way!" shouted the children, all rushing at the White Elephant. They climbed upon his back, his trunk, his legs, hung from his big flat ears, rode upon his tusks, covered him so entirely that the only place left for Nicky was the tip end of the tail, where he hung very happily.

On through the forest marched the Elephant, crushing bushes and ferns with every step, but gentle, oh so gentle and careful with the children. On he went until it looked as though a stream of silver were rushing through the forest. It was better than silver for those hot and thirsty children, it was a stream shining in the moonlight. Not deep enough to harm the smallest but fresh and clear and full of fine

pools for swimming. When any child went too near the rushing waterfall at the top they got a fine rolling and ducking until the Elephant's trunk fished them out. The others laughed so hard that the forest echoed with their laughter. Oh, they were having a wonderful time!

"Time to go home!" sang Nicky, and sure enough there was a pale, golden light in the east, the sign of the rising sun.

The Elephant picked up one child after another and threw them on his back.

"Oh, can't we see the monkeys before we go home?" cried the littlest one, sitting on the end of a tusk. And, "Can't we see the monkeys, please, dear Elephant?" echoed the children.

"Bless your hearts, indeed you shall," trumpeted the Elephant. "I'll take you back through the heart of the jungle where the monkeys live."

There they all were, swinging from the trees, picking queer fruit which they sucked for early breakfast or threw at one another. When they saw the Elephant loaded down with children they chattered with delight, dashed to the ground, made a huge circle around him, danced and danced—until the sun rose!

"Hurry, hurry! you will be seen!" cried Nicky.

So with the monkeys and the children waving and calling to each other the White Elephant turned homeward, one baby monkey still hanging on to the Elephant's ear. I don't know whether he lost his way or whether watching so carefully to see that all the children were safe made him forget to take the path to the back door of the temple. Anyway, he marched right down the wide street which ran through the center of the city,—and the sun was shining brightly!

Of course no one could help seeing a big white elephant with several hundred children and one monkey hanging to him. The first to see the marvellous sight was a man going to work. He gave a shout of wonder, called a friend who yelled, "Do I dream? Wonder of wonders!" and in a few moments the whole city was awake.

"The Sacred White Elephant has broken his centuries of sleep to stalk forth and carry our children!" they cried. "Never was such a sight seen before! Ah, gracious White Elephant, pause and listen to our prayers!"

But the Elephant did not stop. He marched right on, with the children clinging to him, through the silver gates of the temple, across the court to his own pedestal. There he stood

as usual, only instead of a blanket and robe of gold and jewels he was covered with children, and instead of standing like a dead image he threw up his trunk and trumpeted. The court was full of people, indeed the whole city was there and no efforts of the terrified priests could keep the crowd from pushing into the inner temple and kneeling before the Elephant.

"Silence!" he trumpeted. Not a whisper was heard.

"I have come down from my pedestal and walked through your city because——"

All were listening breathless to hear the great reason for which an ivory elephant had come to life.

"Because there was no one else who knew how to play with the children!"

"Bless him, bless him!" cried the mothers and fathers.

"From this day forward," went on the Elephant, "I shall play with them every full moon, and that night shall belong to the children. But in the meantime"—here he trumpeted again. "In the meantime I command the priests to use the treasure which has been offered to me these last hundreds of years in making the whole city a children's playground."

"Yes, yes," moaned the priests.

"They shall have swimming pools, gardens, merry-go-rounds, see-saws to play with, sweets and ices very often and plenty of animals to play with—especially monkeys!"

Here the little monkey climbed down the Elephant's trunk and danced in front of him.

"If I hear children crying or see them looking unhappy I shall know who is to blame and I shall—" here he absolutely rolled his blue eyes at the priests and they shivered as though cold water had just been thrown upon them.

"All shall be as you say, most Sacred Elephant!" they shrieked.

"Remember!" trumpeted the Elephant, and —there was nothing but a white ivory image standing there again!

The children climbed off his back and Nicky placed the gleaming ornaments upon him. Slowly the crowd scattered, smiling; gaily the children scampered off to talk of all the wonderful doings; gloomily the priests shuffled away to open their hidden treasure and make plans for a gigantic play-ground which should fill the entire city.

Within the inner temple the Sacred Elephant stood motionless while upon his trunk the smallest monkey in the jungle swung and chat-

tered and by his side a gay little black boy danced a jig.

The Sacred White Elephant winked his turquoise eye, first at the boy, then at the monkey.

"Good work, comrades!" he said.

"Did the children ride upon the Elephant every full moon, and are they riding still?" you ask.

All I know is that in India, or some other country, there is a city which is called the Children's City, because it is full of things that children love the most. In the temple stands an enormous white ivory elephant and every child in the city wears, around his neck, a tiny image of this elephant. One of them was brought to this country—so the tale must be true.

III

THE OLD WOMAN AND THE TRAMP

By H. L. Braekstad

THERE was once a tramp who went plodding his way through a forest. The distance between the houses was so great that he had little hope of finding a shelter before the night set in. But all of a sudden he saw some lights between the trees. He then discovered a cottage, where there was a fire burning on the hearth. How nice it would be to roast one's self before that fire, and to get a bite of something, he thought; and so he dragged himself toward the cottage.

Just then an old woman came toward him.

"Good evening, and well met!" said the tramp.

"Good evening," said the woman. "Where do you come from?"

"South of the sun, and east of the moon," said the tramp; "and now I am on the way

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home again, for I have been all over the world with the exception of this parish," he said.

"You must be a great traveler, then," said the woman. "What may be your business here?"

"Oh, I want a shelter for the night," he said.

"I thought as much," said the woman; "but you may as well get away from here at once, for my husband is not at home, and my place is not an inn," she said.

"My good woman," said the tramp, "you must not be so cross and hard-hearted, for we are both human beings, and should help one another as it is written."

"Help one another?" said the woman, "help? Did you ever hear such a thing? Who'll help me, do you think? I haven't got a morsel in the house! No, you'll have to look for quarters elsewhere," she said.

But the tramp was like the rest of his kind. Although the old woman grumbled and complained as much as she could, he was just as persistent as ever, and went on begging and praying like a starved dog, until at last she gave in, and he got permission to lie on the floor for the night.

That was very kind, he thought, and he thanked her for it.

"Better on the floor without sleep, than suffer cold in the forest deep," he said; for he was a merry fellow, this tramp, and was always ready with a rhyme.

When he came into the room he could see that the woman was not so badly off as she had pretended; but she was a greedy and stingy woman of the worst sort, and was always complaining and grumbling.

He now made himself very agreeable, of course, and asked her in his most insinuating manner for something to eat.

"Where am I to get it from?" said the woman. "I haven't tasted a morsel myself the whole day."

But the tramp was a cunning fellow, he was.

"Poor old granny, you must be starving," he said. "Well, well, I suppose I shall have to ask you to have something with me, then?"

"Have something with you!" said the woman. "You don't look as if you could ask any one to have anything! What have you got to offer one, I should like to know?"

"He who far and wide does roam sees many things not known at home; and he who many things has seen has wits about him and senses keen," said the tramp. "Better dead than lose one's head! Lend be a pot, granny!"

The old woman now became very inquisitive, as you may guess, and so she let him have a pot.

He filled it with water and put it on the fire, and then he blew with all his might till the fire was burning fiercely all round it. Then he took a four inch nail from his pocket, turned it three times in his hand, and put it into the pot.

The woman stared with all her might.

"What's this going to be?" she asked.

"Nail broth," said the tramp, and began to stir the water with the porridge-stick.

"Nail broth?" asked the woman.

"Yes, nail broth," said the tramp.

The old woman had seen and heard a good deal in her time, but that anybody could have made broth with a nail, well, she had never heard the like before.

"That's something for poor people to know," she said, "and I should like to learn how to make it."

"That which is not worth having will always go a-begging," said the tramp, but if she wanted to learn how to make it she had only to watch him, he said, and went on stirring the broth.

The old woman squatted on the ground, her

hands clasping her knees, and her eyes following his hand as he stirred the broth.

"This generally makes good broth," he said; "but this time it will very likely be rather thin, for I have been making broth the whole week with the same nail. If one only had a handful of sifted oatmeal to put in, that would make it all right," he said. "But what one has to go without, it's no use thinking more about," and so he stirred the broth again.

"Well, I think I have a scrap of flour somewhere," said the old woman, and went out to fetch some, and it was both good and fine.

The tramp began putting the flour into the broth, and went on stirring, while the woman sat staring now at him and then at the pot until her eyes nearly burst their sockets.

"This broth would be good enough for company," he said, putting in one handful of flour after another. "If I had only a bit of salted beef and a few potatoes to put in, it would be fit for gentlefolks, however particular they might be," he said. "But what one has to go without, it's no use thinking more about."

When the old woman really began to think it over, she thought she had some potatoes, and perhaps a bit of beef as well; and these she

gave the tramp, who went on stirring, while she sat and stared as hard as ever.

"This will be grand enough for the best in the land," he said.

"Well, I never!" said the woman, "and just fancy—all with a nail!"

He was really a wonderful man, that tramp!

"If one had only a little barley and a drop of milk, we could ask the king himself to have some of it, for this is what he has every blessed evening—that I know, for I have been in service under the king's cook."

"Dear me! Ask the king to have some! Well, I never!" exclaimed the woman, slapping her knees. She was quite awe-struck at the tramp and his grand connections.

"But what one has to go without, it's no use thinking more about," said the tramp.

And then she remembered she had a little barley; and as for milk, well, she wasn't quite out of that, she said, for she had a very good cow. And then she went to fetch the one and the other.

The tramp went on stirring, and the woman sat staring. One moment at him and the next at the pot.

Then all at once the tramp took out the nail.

"Now it's ready, and now we will have a

real good feast," he said. "But to this kind of soup the king and queen always had coffee and one sandwich at least. And then they always have a cloth on the table when they eat," he said. "But what one has to go without, it's no use thinking more about."

But by this time the old woman herself had begun to feel quite grand and fine, I can tell you; and if that was all that was wanted to make it just as the king had it, she thought it would be nice to have it exactly the same way for once, and play at being king and queen with the tramp. She went straight to the cupboard and brought out butter and cheese, smoked-beef and veal until at last the table looked as if it were decked for company.

Never in her life had the old woman had such a grand feast, and never had she tasted such broth, and just fancy, made only with a nail!

She was in such a good and merry humour at having learned such an economical way of making broth that she did not know how to make enough of the tramp, who had taught her such a useful thing.

So they ate and drank, and drank and ate, until they became both tired and sleepy.

The tramp was now going to lie down on

the floor. But that would never do, thought the old woman; no, that was impossible. "Such a grand person must have a bed to lie in," she said.

He did not need much pressing. "It's just like the sweet Christmas time," he said, "and a nicer woman I never came across. Ah, well; Happy are they who meet with such good people," said he: and he lay down on the bed and went asleep.

And next morning, when he woke, the first thing he got was coffee and bacon.

When he was going, the old woman gave him a bright dollar piece.

"And thanks, many thanks, for what you have taught me," she said. "Now I shall live in comfort, since I have learned how to make broth with a nail."

"Well, it isn't very difficult if one only has something good to add to it," said the tramp as he went his way.

The woman stood at the door staring after him.

"Such people don't grow on every bush," she said.

IV

HOW THEY CAME TO HAVE KITE DAY IN CHINA

Retold from a Chinese Folk Tale

By Katherine D. Cather

IN the lovely province of Kwang Tung, a sage named Ng Chew lived in the far-off time. He not only was versed in the lore of past and present, but knew future events as well, and used his knowledge and his power to benefit mankind.

One night in a vision he saw that a pestilence was about to sweep over the valley in which he lived, and his first thought was that he must save his people. He went from house to house telling the news and bidding every one flee with him to the mountains, and a few hours after he started on his mission the homes in the lowlands were deserted.

Up on the heights the people were safe in the crisp, clean air. But after many days had

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passed they wanted to return to their homes. They thought of the growth in the rice fields and of the approaching harvest time. "We have been here long enough," they declared. "By this time the danger is over and we ought to go back." But the wise Ng Chew knew it was not safe to return, and urged them to stay. There were a few who would not listen to his words. They started back to the lowlands, and Ng Chew wondered how he could keep the others on the mountain. Then a happy thought crossed his mind. He set everybody to making and flying kites, and soon had them so interested that they were glad to stay.

Days afterward, when he knew the danger was past, he led them back to the valley. Then they realized what a blessed thing he had done in keeping them on the mountain, for all who had refused to stay there with him had died of the pestilence.

The people's hearts were filled with gratitude toward the man who had saved them.

"We will honour Ng Chew as long as he lives," they said. "When his birthday comes we will all fly kites."

This they did. Each year, on the birthday of Ng Chew, they left the rice fields and spent the day flying kites.

The word spread beyond the little valley and from province to province, until all over the land kite flying marked the birthday of the sage of Kwang Tung. The wise man died and centuries passed, but still the Chinese keep Kite Day, honouring him who in the long ago led his people to safety in the mountains.

V

HOW HAN HSIN MADE PRINCES LAUGH

By Mary Stewart

IT was long, long ago in the country where the sun shines when we are asleep.

Yes, China, where the boys and men wear their hair in long pig-tails, and everyone eats lots of rice and roasted rats and soup made of birds' nests. We don't see how people can be very big and strong who live on those things, and the boy who first flew a kite was even smaller than the smallest boy there.

He was so tiny that when he was a man he was still the size of a little boy, but he was clever, oh, he was so clever! His name was Han Hsin.

When he was a scrap of a boy, with a pig-tail almost as long as himself, he was playing ball one day at recess time in a plum orchard next the school. The white petals from the plum blossoms drifted down like snow upon

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the laughing boys as they ran over the grass after the ball, their pigtails swinging to and fro. Then a wail of dismay filled the orchard, for their one precious ball had rolled into a hole in the ground, a hole too deep and narrow to climb into!

Then the solemn-faced teacher, watching from the doorway of the school, saw little Han Hsin grasp a stick in one hand, some earth in the other, and give an order to the bigger boys. At once they also filled their hands and their clean blue jackets with earth and threw it into the hole, while Han Hsin kept stirring the ball with his stick to keep it on top of the quickly growing pile. Soon he threw himself down to the ground at the mouth of the hole, with a bigger boy sitting on top of him as a weight, and, reaching down, brought up the missing ball. A shout of delighted laughter rang out from the boys, joined in even by the solemn teacher. "Little Han Hsin is as clever in his play as in his work!" he said to himself.

When he grew up his teachers, who all knew how wonderfully wise he was, wanted the Prince of their kingdom to take Han Hsin for one of his advisers. Every ruler then had a group of wise men to advise him in his affairs of state.

So little Han Hsin put on his best black satin coat, and black cap with a green button on top, and was presented by his teachers to Prince Golden Sun. But Golden Sun looked at that black figure bowing so ceremoniously before him, and just laughed. "We do not want a child among our advisers," he said scornfully, "take him away!"

Of course Han Hsin was dreadfully disappointed. He would have liked to serve his Prince. "But if Golden Sun will not take me perhaps the great Chin Pa across the mountain will," he thought.

So over the high mountain which separated the two kingdoms Han Hsin journeyed, to the palace of Chin Pa.

That prince was the biggest, strongest prince in all China. When he was a baby he was fed upon the milk of a tiger, and that, his people believed, had made him so strong that by just breathing he could raise the roof off a house. He could even, they declared, lift himself up by his pig-tail!

Anyway he was a gigantic figure among his courtiers, and his eyes blazed beneath his golden crown with the fiery light of a wild beast's.

Before him stood the little black, bowing

figure of Han Hsin, offering his services as adviser to the enormous monarch!

Even the courtiers smiled at the sight, and the Tiger Prince himself laughed until the room shook and Han Hsin bowed again, almost to the ground, to hide the tears in his dark eyes.

"What can such a boy do?" questioned Chin Pa. "Why I might tell him to cut my head off, but even if I held it out—so—without moving, he wouldn't have the strength to do it! Let him take my spear. If he can hold it straight for half a day I will give him a chance to serve me."

The heavy iron spear was five times as tall as Han Hsin. He held it for a few moments, then it shook, trembled, and fell with a great clatter to the ground.

Again the Prince roared with laughter. "Take him away, I do not want him," he cried, while Han Hsin grew as red as a crimson peony.

So the little fellow was driven from the court, amid the laughter of all except the Prince's advisers.

"Your majesty is making a great mistake," they cried. "This Han Hsin may be tiny in body, but his great wisdom is the talk of all

the teachers in Golden Sun's kingdom. Now that you have turned him away he may be used by some other ruler to destroy your land."

The Tiger Prince still laughed, but to please his advisers he mounted his black charger, and followed by his nobles rode after Han Hsin planning to get him out of the way by killing him as one would a troublesome black fly.

Little Han Hsin, walking alone up the mountain, heard them coming, guessed they were following to do him harm, and looked around for a place in which to hide. But there was not even a bush in sight, they were almost upon him, and throwing himself upon the bare mountain side, his feet toward the top, he made believe he was fast asleep.

How his heart must have beaten as the great Prince drew rein, sprang from his steed and bent over the little figure! Then he heard another roar of laughter. "Why the fellow is a fool!" cried Chin Pa. "He sleeps in the sun with his head down and his feet up toward the sky. Such a silly one could never destroy my kingdom; let him sleep in peace!"

Still laughing, the Prince and his nobles rode back to the palace.

As soon as they were out of sight, Han Hsin jumped up and hurried on. Before he reached

his home, however, war had broken out between Prince Golden Sun and Chin Pa, and the army of the Tiger Prince was the terror of all China.

Poor Golden Sun! His soldiers were weak and untrained, for he had no fine leaders, and he was terribly frightened. He heard rumours, too, that the Tiger Prince was planning to burn Golden Sun's palace, and cut off that Prince's head. Trembling with fear he called all the wisest men in his kingdom together, and among them came Han Hsin.

When the Prince saw that little figure entering the palace, he wanted to send him away, but the wise men insisted that Han Hsin was wiser than any of them.

"The only hope of saving your majesty's kingdom," they said, "lies in giving Han Hsin command of the whole army."

The Prince was so terrified thinking how it would feel to lose his head that he was ready to do anything, and Han Hsin was made general over the thousands of untrained soldiers.

In a short time they all adored him. He knew every man by name, could tell, when the regiments passed in review before him, whether every soldier was in his place, and the army changed from a poor straggling one

into a splendidly trained, disciplined body of soldiers.

Han Hsin exchanged his black satin jacket and green buttoned cap for a scarlet robe embroidered with the golden sun—in honour of his Prince—and a breastplate and helmet of gold. Arrayed in them he looked, perhaps, like a small boy playing soldier, but the spirit of a hero flashed from his dark eyes, and when he ordered his men to prepare to march across the mountains by each carrying an empty sack, they obeyed instantly, and no one smiled. It must have seemed like a funny order, though, and then there came a still stranger one. Instead of leading his men up the one mountain road, Han Hsin commanded them to follow him right up the mountain side to the place where great black rocks, as slippery as glass, rose in front of them. The fact was, Chin Pa had heard they were coming and had stationed his men in the one narrow road, planning to cut Han Hsin's army into small pieces. But Han Hsin knew of this, and when he reached those inclimbable black rocks he told every man to fill his sack with earth and throw those filled sacks down for steps. Then up the steps marched the soldiers in perfect order, following their little General to the very top.

Do you suppose he remembered with a smile the day in the plum orchard so many years ago, when he had piled earth in the hole to save a ball? By piling earth steps up these black rocks he hoped this day to save a kingdom!

Down on the other side they advanced upon the rear of Chin Pa's army. Utterly surprising them, Han Hsin's soldiers won a glorious victory.

That was only the beginning of the little General's clever doings.

One time he advanced against a great army from another kingdom, and the enemy turned and ran away. They ran until they reached a river, where they climbed into all the boats, sailed across, and made a bonfire of the boats so that Han Hsin could not follow them. The river was so wide no one could swim it, and feeling perfectly safe the runaway army decided to hold a feast to celebrate their escape.

What do you suppose they ate? Perhaps the roast rats we read about would have seemed like a feast to them, with gold fish from the river, and sugar rice-cakes and tea, of course. Don't Chinese always drink tea at a feast? I think they do, out of funny cups without handles. And I suppose the camp was lighted with

coloured paper lanterns and all was as gay as possible.

The night outside was very dark and very quiet. Only the lap, lap of the waves of the river could be heard when the songs and laughter of the camp died down for a moment. Then with the lapping came another sound, a swish, swish, as if hundreds of men were swimming in the waves. But no man could swim across that river, and even if the merry soldiers heard that noise they paid no attention, but turned again to their feasting.

Suddenly through the darkness came a sharp command. "Forward!" and led by Han Hsin, in a water-soaked crimson robe, his thousands of dripping soldiers rushed upon the feasting army. Those soldiers were sitting with chopsticks in their hands instead of swords, and, utterly surprised, were all killed or taken prisoner.

Han Hsin had ordered his men to each find a board, and floating upon them they had swam across safely to make that extraordinary attack!

But where, you wonder, does the kite come in? Oh, that is the best part of the whole story!

Although Han Hsin had won several vic-

tories over Chin Pa, he had never really defeated the whole army. The terrible Tiger Prince was still threatening to invade Golden Sun's kingdom and cut off that ruler's head.

Now Han Hsin knew that the strength of Chin Pa's army lay in a marvellous company of three thousand soldiers, all of whom belonged to one family. Just think, three thousand brothers and cousins and uncles and fathers, all fighting like one man. No wonder they simply couldn't be beaten.

Han Hsin was thinking of them sadly late one afternoon as he sat in his tent, when the flap was lifted and in came an old man carrying—a kite!

"Look," he said to the little general. "I have been working upon this for weeks. In it lies our one hope of scattering that unconquerable three thousand."

Then in a low tone the old man, who was one of Han Hsin's wisest advisers, told his plan. And a wonderful plan it was! Han Hsin beamed with smiles. He took off his golden helmet and breastplate and gorgeous red robe, and dressed himself once more in the black satin jacket and green buttoned cap. Then the old man tied the little General to the kite for its tail! Han Hsin's body guard of

noble soldiers held the ropes while the kite floated up, up, over the tent and the tree tops, in the direction of Chin Pa's camp.

The grey twilight was just deepening into night, and the members of that famous family regiment were lying contentedly outside their tents, talking of their certain victory the next day. Suddenly they saw what looked like a gigantic bird flying over their heads. They sprang to their feet in astonishment, peering up through the darkness as it flew, fluttered and rested above their heads.

Then their astonishment changed to terror, for the strange flying creature spoke, and the soldiers fell upon their knees trembling.

"It is the voice of a god!" they cried hoarsely.

"Return, return to your homes, which are filled with the young and aged!" were the words which rang out through the night. "If you remain here you all will be slain. Who will then worship at the graves of your fathers and carry on your family name? Return!"

On flew the kite with Han Hsin and as it disappeared into the darkness a cry rang through the camp. "It is a warning from a god, let us depart at once!"

That very night the regiment left the camp

and marched back to the south, and the next day a fierce and final battle was fought between Chin Pa and Han Hsin. In the end the little general won a great victory. The Tiger prince was captured and Han Hsin's soldiers were wild with joy. They wished to shoot their gigantic captive at once, but their general said, "No, let him escape and he will kill himself, that will be better."

Up the mountain road rushed Chin Pa, then suddenly he stopped and gazed, horror struck, at a great white rock before him. On it in immense black letters made by living ants were the words, "Heaven destroys Chin Pa." Han Hsin had written the words in honey and the ants were busily devouring it, but the Tiger Prince knew nothing of that, and crying, "Even the ants and worms know Heaven has deserted me! Woe is me!" he plunged a dagger into his heart. But if the family regiment of three thousand had been there even Han Hsin could not have conquered. It was the kite which really won the day!

Soon after these events the cowardly Golden Sun died, and in his place the royal robes and golden crown were placed upon Han Hsin, the smallest prince who ever ruled in China, and the wisest!

His people had one sport which they enjoyed upon every possible occasion. Men and women, boys and girls and tiny children, flew kites in the street, on the seashore, in the courtyard of the palace itself. Even Han Hsin, when he could spare a few moments from the affairs of state, flew one, I am sure. And to this day in China the favourite kite is shaped and painted like a warrior prince, in a crimson embroidered robe and golden trappings—Han Hsin himself!

VI

THE SPARROW AND THE EAGLE

By O. H. Benson

ONCE upon a time there was a great convention held out in the big cow pasture, just outside of a town. Now what do you suppose this convention was? I'll bet you can't guess; I'll tell you what it was. It was a *bird convention:* the biggest crowd of birds anybody ever saw. All the big birds, the middle-sized birds, the little birds, and the little peewees, all dressed up in their Sunday-go-to-meeting clothes.

They visited, and talked, and chirped, and jabbered, and whistled, and shrieked and crowed; such a noise one seldom hears excepting in a great big barnyard or at a regular circus.

As we stood there on the outskirts of that great gathering place, a green pasture where Nature had made for them a wonderful place for just such a convention, it just seemed that every bird wanted to talk at the same time.

They did not seem to have any order or much regard for each other; they all tried to talk, chirp, jabber, whistle, shriek, and crow at the same time, and a little louder than anyone else, and as we were looking on in perfect amazement wondering what in the world would happen next, something interesting suddenly happened. Right out of the middle of that great convention of birds arose something that looked like a big swan at first. Then we saw a big eagle's bald head raised above the rest of the birds, saw him flop his wings, and call the convention to order. I heard him say, "The bird convention will please come to order," and you ought to have seen the birds straighten up and keep quiet. When the eagle spoke and when it raised its head and flapped its wings, everybody knew that the commands must be obeyed and that there must be order.

Then we saw a little English sparrow, way back on the side looking out of the corner of his eyes watching the great eagle. We saw the peewees, the gold finches, the meadow larks, the crows, the blue-birds, and all of them looking at the eagle with great curiosity and wondering just how far they dared go. Then the bald eagle kept perfectly quiet for a little while. All at once one of the birds thought that it was

perfectly safe for him to speak, so he flew up in the air right up close to the eagle and cried out loud, "I am King! I am King!" That just seemed to start every bird to thinking that he ought to be King of all the birds, and it certainly was funny to see how many little birds wanted to be King. The old crow then flew up into the air and said, "I want to be King of all the birds! Caw! Caw! Caw!! *I* am King of all the birds." Just then the gold finch flew up into the air and said, "No! no! no! *I* am King of all the birds!" And so one after the other flew into the air and declared themselves to be the King.

Now, do you think that is the way birds should do or act in order to become great and achieve kingship in life? Do you think they should go about saying they are so and so when they are not? Of course not! Well, that is exactly what some of the other birds thought, too. They were perfectly disgusted with the behaviour of these birds when none of them was fitted to be King.

Nobody seemed to be able to bring order out of chaos at this bird convention except the eagle. Suddenly we saw the eagle soar over the heads of the other birds and cry, "Birds, you will now come to order!" and he flapped

his wings on their heads until they were again perfectly quiet. It was so quiet you could only hear the swishing and buzzing of the eagle's wings as he flew around over the mass of feathery heads. Then he flew to a side lot and lighted on a stump. He sat there and looked over the birds and then said, "Listen, my bird friends: God made us all to fly. Our wings are all built according to the size of our bodies and to meet the needs of our lives. There is but one fair way to determine who shall be King of all the birds, and that is by a contest in flying. The bird who can fly the highest and maintain its balance in the air should, I think, be declared the King of all the birds. Now all who are in favour of determining who shall be the King of the birds by a flying contest of this kind, make it known by saying 'Aye.'" All of the birds then voted in favour of a flying contest.

The bald eagle then said, "The Convention will please come to order!" The birds came to order at once. Then the eagle said, "We will line up in two columns, I will give the signal and we will take turns from East to West."

It happened that number one was a big daring and proud chicken hawk. The hawk flew into the air as directed and flew as high as he

could and then came down again. Then the blue-jay flew into the air and just flew and flew, but he did not seem to know how to go up into the air very high. He had learned to fly from tree to tree but had never learned how to go up into the air very far. And so on, one after the other, the birds tried their prowess. When all had taken his turn, the bald eagle turned first to the left column and then to the right and asked, "Have you all had a chance? It seems to me as I have counted those contesting that we are one member short. Where is the bird who has not had a chance to fly and demonstrate his title to kingship?" Nobody answered. Nobody seemed to know what bird it was. Just then, as we were watching the birds we saw a little, mean, sneaking, nasty English sparrow hop way back of column left and walk under the tails of all the birds, sneaking its way down the line until it got behind the stump on which the bald eagle sat, and while the eagle was busy directing the convention trying to determine what step should be taken next, the English sparrow hid himself directly behind Mr. Eagle.

The bald eagle said, "Now since you have all had a chance, I presume that you want me to demonstrate my ability to fly." The birds all

agreed that the eagle should have his turn in the contest. Then as the great eagle lifted his wings to start in flight, we saw something very strange happen. The little English sparrow just jumped up from behind the stump onto the eagle's back and hid between the eagle's wings among the feathers, taking firm hold, so that he could ride well and safely. The great convention of birds then saw the eagle wind his way up, and up, and up, into the air, and all the birds had to stretch their necks to follow the great master bird in his flight. The little peewee could hardly see the eagle because he had gone up so high. Instead of appearing to be a great bird, the eagle looked smaller and smaller in the distance. Then he hung in the air, suspended as though by a string, and maintained his balance perfectly. It was evident to all the birds as well as to us, who were watching the performance, that the bald eagle had certainly won the right to be King of all the birds.

Just then I saw something happen which no one really expected. What do you suppose it was? That little mean, nasty, sneaking English sparrow, who all this time had been on the back of the great bald eagle, flew into the air five or six feet higher than the eagle and began

to screech, "Look at me! I am King! I am King!! I am King of all the birds." While the little English sparrow was thus boasting of what it had become the bald eagle began to descend gracefully in great swoops until he reached the earth. Then what do you suppose happened to the English sparrow? It had ridden up all the way on the back of the eagle to the dizzy heights, and now it found it had to come down alone, without the help of the eagle.

What do you think would happen to you if somebody should put you up high in a great tree-top before you had a chance to learn how to climb up there? Don't you think you would stand some chance of falling down out of the tree? This is just what happened to the English sparrow. After he got up in the air and discovered the eagle was gone he knew he would have to come down alone from a plane to which he had never learned to fly and therefore would not know how to come back. His tiny wings fluttered, he turned somersaults in the air, spun like a top, and then swished through the air and just a few feet in front of us, he dropped upon the pavement, and when I looked upon the would-be King, the English sparrow, all I could find were a lot of scattered

feathers and broken bones, spurts of blood, and extinguished hopes of kingship.

Mr. Bald Eagle could not have gone up so high and could not have flown so well and returned to earth so gracefully if he had not started when he was a tiny bird to learn how to fly, learning a little at a time, until he could climb the highest cliffs. That is what the bald eagle did and that is why he is King of all the birds.

VII

DISH LAND

By Eleanor Hunter

"I HATE to do dishes! I just hate 'em!" Poor little Mary was doing the dishes for the third time that day. Her mother was ill, and so she had to wash and dry them and was most unhappy about it.

"I don't see why we have to have dishes anyway! When I grow up, I am going to have wooden dishes or paper dishes so my little girl won't have to wash them."

"Hateful old things! I wish they'd break."

Now it just happened at that moment that Mary was drying her mother's loveliest fruit dish and Mary was more than frightened when it slipped out of her hands and smashed into a hundred pieces.

"O-o-h! What—will—I—do!"

She picked up the pieces and threw them away and finished the dishes in silence.

Then she hurried upstairs to her bed without even kissing her mother goodnight.

From *Child Life Magazine.*

Now, you know, just going to bed without kissing one's mother good-night is enough to make one unhappy, without breaking her best fruit dish, but when you have done both—Oh, it's a terrible feeling, and that was exactly the feeling Mary had as she climbed into bed.

She lay there and kept thinking and thinking about it, wondering what she would do, when all at once there was the queerest sound outside her door. She listened. She heard voices, the funniest little squeaky voices, not at all like any she had ever heard before.

"Yes, it's time we give her a lesson," said one.

"This is her door," said another. "And she went to bed without kissing her mother good-night, too."

Just then the door opened and in walked the tea-pot, the sugar bowl, the milk pitcher, all her mother's cups and saucers and spoons and knives and forks.

The knives all looked like soldiers, and, in fact, all the dishes seemed to have faces and arms and legs.

Mary was about to pull the covers up over her head as two of the knives came over and said to her, "Come along!"

You can imagine how you would feel if all

your own dishes suddenly grew arms and legs and faces and walked into your bedroom and talked to you!

"No, no, no!" she cried.

"There, I always knew she was a baby," said her own old baby plate.

"Well, I'm not," she answered as she jumped out of bed. "And I'm not afraid of you. You are only dishes anyway."

"All right, then. Step lively!" said the funny fat sugar bowl.

A knife took hold of one of her arms.

"Where are you going to take me?"

"Never mind that," said another knife as he took hold of her other arm.

Mary was amazed to see that the knives were as tall as she, or rather she was as short as they, and they looked very stern as they marched her out the back door.

Then, stranger and stranger, in her back yard instead of the garden that had always been there, she saw a big lake with the moon just coming up over the far edge of it.

The next thing she knew the two knives lifted her into a salad bowl, and then all the dishes floated right out into the water.

She wondered what would happen next. She thought they'd surely be drowned, but they

weren't. The knives and forks and spoons crossed each other nicely on the plates, as if they were quite in the habit of sailing, and they all managed to keep near together so Mary could hear what they were saying.

A plate near-by was telling his knife and fork and spoon, "I don't know as we really ought to take her to Dish Land."

"It is too good for her," answered the fork, "but we have to let her know some way that we have feelings and that we want to be kept clean and that we don't like to be dropped on the floor and get cracked."

"And perhaps," said the spoon a little more kindly, "if she knew we had ordinary dish feelings she would wash us cleaner and not feel so badly about doing it."

"Hurry up there!" called the teapot. He seemed to be the head of the expedition. Mary thought she'd stand up a minute to see how things looked, but just as soon as she tried to, the bowl she was in shouted to her in an angry voice, "Sit down! Do you want to tip me over? Even if you are cross to us, I don't want to drown you."

Mary was never so surprised in her life—but she sat down.

Just then she heard a shout from the sugar

bowl. "Here we are!" and they touched the shore of an island.

The bowl she was in walked up on shore and tipped her out.

She sat there for a few minutes looking around. You would, too, if you were there, because it was the queerest island you ever heard of.

The ground was nice clean linoleum, and where the trees would be, were racks—all holding nice clean dish towels, and what Mary thought must be their houses were dish cupboards—all very clean with some dishes neatly in place and room for others.

As soon as her company landed, the dishes on the island came running down to see them.

Mary thought it was very funny to see them climb down from their shelves. One poor cup that seemed in a great hurry knocked against a saucer and they both fell.

Quick as a flash, four plain white cups came running up, carrying a large white plate. They picked up the pieces of broken cup and saucer and, putting them on the plate, hurried off again.

Mary was wondering what would become of them, when the spoon that had spoken kindly to her, came and helped her stand up.

It looked around to see if anybody was looking at them, but as no one seemed to be, it said to Mary, "If you come with me I'll show you all about Dish Land and then perhaps you'll like us better."

The spoon smiled a little as it said this, and Mary decided then and there that she would always like spoons anyway.

Somehow or other Mary couldn't help thinking of the spoon as "she," because it seemed so much like a girl, and so she was not quite as surprised at what happened a little later.

"Over this way is the dance hall," the girl-spoon said as she took Mary's hand. As soon as they entered the dance hall, a fork came up and asked the spoon to dance. This is what so surprised Mary—or would have most any other little girl if she hadn't always thought that spoons were like little girls and forks like little boys.

The spoon told Mary to wait there until she came back, and then danced off with the fork. Mary sat on a tiny bench and watched for a while. The floor seemed full of knives and forks and spoons dancing and laughing and all seeming to have a very happy time.

Just then a big wooden mixing spoon came up ringing a bell and shouting for everyone

to be quiet. As soon as it was quiet enough, the mixing spoon called, "Where's Mary? Where's Mary? The teapot says it's time to punish her for breaking Old Lady Fruitplate."

Mary jumped up and started to run, and as soon as she did all the dishes started after her —the knives and forks and spoons and then the plates and cups and saucers.

Pretty soon she came to a beautiful place where the ground was a rug and the houses were china cabinets and the trees were dining room chairs and tables. The dishes that lived here were all very beautiful Wedgewood and Haviland china, but they were too dignified to join in the chase. They just raised their hands in horror and stared with round-eyed amazement. (They had probably never seen a little girl in Dish Land before—much less chased by all the other dishes on the Island.)

Mary ran on and on. Next she came to the place where all the pots and pans lived, and when they saw what was happening they started to run too. They made so much noise that Mary was more frightened than ever, and she thought she'd never get home. At last, just after she turned a corner, she saw a door and hurried to open it. It led into her own kitchen! But she didn't stop there.

She ran on through the house and jumped into bed.

Her mother was expecting her, because you know she hadn't been in to kiss her mother good-night yet. "Oh, mother, I've been such a naughty girl!" Mary cried. And so she told the whole story about hating to do the dishes, and about breaking the fruit dish, and about her trip to Dish Land, and everything.

. . . And Mother? What did Mother say?

Well, you know what mothers generally say. And I guess you know how much better you feel after you have told Mother about the things that went wrong. Well, that's just exactly what Mary's mother said and that's the way Mary felt.

VIII

THE MONKEY AND THE CROCODILE

By Ellen C. Babbitt

Part One

A MONKEY lived in a great tree on a river bank. In the river there were many Crocodiles. A Crocodile watched the Monkey for a long time, and one day she said to her son: "My son, get one of those Monkeys for me. I want the heart of a Monkey to eat." "How am I to catch a Monkey?" asked the little Crocodile. "I do not travel on land, and the Monkey does not go into the water." "Put your wits to work, and you'll find a way," said the mother. And the little Crocodile thought and thought. At last he said to himself: "I know what I'll do. I'll get that Monkey that lives in a big tree on the river bank. He wishes to go across the river to the island where the fruit is so ripe." So the Crocodile swam to the tree where the

From *Jataka Tales*, by Ellen C. Babbitt. Copyright by the Century Co., New York.

Monkey lived. But he was a stupid Crocodile. "Oh, Monkey," he called, "come with me over to the island where the fruit is so ripe." "How can I go with you?" asked the Monkey. "I do not swim." "No—but I do. I will take you over on my back," said the Crocodile. The Monkey was greedy, and wanted the ripe fruit, so he jumped down on the Crocodile's back. "Off we go!" said the Crocodile. "This is a fine ride you are giving me!" said the Monkey. "Do you think so? Well, how do you like this?" asked the Crocodile, diving. "Oh, don't!" cried the Monkey, as he went under the water. He was afraid to let go, and he did not know what to do under the water. When the Crocodile came up, the Monkey sputtered and choked. "Why did you take me under water, Crocodile?" he asked. "I am going to kill you by keeping you under water," answered the Crocodile. "My mother wants Monkey-heart to eat, and I'm going to take yours to her." "I wish you had told me you wanted my heart," said the Monkey, "then I might have brought it with me." "How queer!" said the stupid Crocodile. "Do you mean to say that you left your heart back there in the tree?" "That is what I mean," said the Monkey. "If you want my heart, we must

go back to the tree and get it. But we are so near the island where the ripe fruit is, please take me there first." "No, Monkey," said the Crocodile, "I'll take you straight back to your tree. Never mind the ripe fruit. Get your heart and bring it to me at once. Then we'll see about going to the island." "Very well," said the Monkey. But no sooner had he jumped onto the bank of the river than—whisk! up he ran into the tree. From the topmost branches he called down to the Crocodile in the water below: "My heart is way up here! If you want it, come for it, come for it!"

Part Two

The Monkey soon moved away from that tree. He wanted to get away from the Crocodile, so that he might live in peace. But the Crocodile found him, far down the river, living in another tree. In the middle of the river was an island covered with fruit-trees. Half-way between the bank of the river and the island, a large rock rose out of the water. The Monkey could jump to the rock, and then to the island. The Crocodile watched the Monkey crossing from the bank of the river to the rock, and then to the island. He thought to himself, "The Monkey will stay on the island all day, and I'll

catch him on his way home at night." The Monkey had a fine feast, while the Crocodile swam about, watching him all day. Toward night the Crocodile crawled out of the water and lay on the rock, perfectly still. When it grew dark among the trees, the Monkey started for home. He ran down to the river bank, and there he stopped. "What is the matter with the rock?" the Monkey thought to himself. "I never saw it so high before. The Crocodile is lying on it!" But he went to the edge of the water and called: "Hello, Rock!" No answer. Then he called again: 'Hello, Rock!" Three times the Monkey called, and then he said: "Why is it, Friend Rock, that you do not answer me to-night?" "Oh," said the stupid Crocodile to himself, "the rock answers the Monkey at night. I'll have to answer for the rock this time." So he answered: "Yes, Monkey! What is it?" The Monkey laughed, and said: "Oh, it's you, Crocodile, is it?" "Yes," said the Crocodile. "I am waiting here for you. I am going to eat you." "You have caught me in a trap this time," said the Monkey. "There is no other way for me to go home. Open your mouth wide so I can jump right into it." Now the Monkey well knew that when Crocodiles open their mouths

wide, they shut their eyes. While the Crocodile lay on the rock with his mouth wide open and his eyes shut, the Monkey jumped. But not into his mouth! Oh, no! He landed on the top of the Crocodile's head, and then sprang quickly to the bank. Up he whisked into his tree. When the Crocodile saw the trick the Monkey had played on him, he said: "Monkey, you have great cunning. You know no fear. I'll let you alone after this." "Thank you, Crocodile, but I shall be on the watch for you just the same," said the Monkey.

IX

THE FLUTE THAT BLEW FROM FAIRYLAND

By Mary Stewart

SOMEWHERE, sometime, somehow, there was a village where every one was perfectly miserable.

The men walked with their heads down and their eyes half-closed, grumbling and swearing all the time under their breath. The women's lips all went up in the middle and down in the corners,—like this. They sighed and groaned while they worked and cooked the food, which was so tasteless and horrid that the men swore out loud when they tasted it and sometimes threw the dishes upon the floor. Then the women scolded and cried and the children—ran away!

They were always running away. Whenever they were told to wash their hands or learn their lessons or work in the kitchen or the

From *Tell Me a Story I Never Heard Before*, by Mary Stewart. Copyright by Fleming H. Revell Company, New York.

garden, they stamped their feet and shouted, "No!" and—ran away! Where did they run to? They ran to the big apple orchards which grew around the village. There were hundreds of apple trees and they looked as cross and behaved as horribly as all the people.

The tree trunks were twisted into horrid shapes as though they were grumbling all the time, their blossoms were few and small and the apples sour and rotten. But the children liked to climb the trees to get away from the scolding grown-ups, and the green apples were useful to throw at one another. They didn't have much fun though. They had caught the surly ways of the men and women, and they slapped each other and pulled hair and stuck out their tongues and did worse things than the crossest child you know.

There was only one boy who was different from the rest. His name was Jack. He looked crosser than any of them, but that was because in his heart he knew there was something wrong with all the people in the village. So he screwed up his forehead and looked sulky and puzzled because, although he hated every one's cross ways, he didn't know what it meant to be different. He had never seen any one smile—just think of that!

But one day—wasn't it extraordinary?—one day a fairy lost his way and flew right into the middle of the village where there was an old fountain! Of course the fountain wouldn't play or sparkle in that dreary spot. so it had dried up and the elf perched right upon the spout and looked around him.

"Goodness gracious!" he exclaimed. "What a dreary place! Why my golden cloak is turning gray and,—why, I would forget how to fly if I stayed here any longer. Hello, boy!" he called out to Jack, who was standing looking at him, his mouth wide open in surprise. "Hello, what is the matter with you and every one else in this dreadful place?"

"I don't know," answered Jack, "I have often wondered. How do you make your eyes and mouth look like that, as though the sun were shining through?"

The fairy laughed and Jack looked more astonished than ever. That amused the elf so much that he jumped to the rim of the old fountain and began to dance. More and more bewildered did Jack look and at last the fairy pulled a tiny flute out of his belt and began to play upon it. It was the gayest, sweetest, softest little tune that you ever heard and suddenly, very suddenly,—Jack smiled!

The elf stopped playing and clapped his hands with delight.

"There!" he exclaimed, "if you hadn't smiled I'd have turned into a black goblin, I was getting so nervous about you. Anybody who can see a fairy generally smiles all the time, and you saw me, so I was sure there was a smile in your heart somewhere. Now listen! I must be off to Fairyland, I'm late already for the Queen's birthday party, but because you saw me you really belong to us and I'll tell you a secret. When you can play that tune upon the flute you'll find your way to Fairyland, and when you get there you'll learn enough magic to become a fairy prince or—to make this whole miserable village merry if you want to!"

"How can I learn to play the flute?" began Jack. But the fairy was off, looking like a sparkle of sunshine in the distance before the words were out of the boy's mouth.

Jack began to frown again, then suddenly he remembered.

"I am one of 'them.' I understand now why every one here is so miserable. Not a single person believes in fairy smiles or laughs or dances. I'll show them!" and off toward the apple-orchards he ran.

Although it was spring time, the trees were

more wretched looking than ever. There were a few small yellow leaves on them and no sign of a blossom. The trunks were so twisted and slippery that it was almost impossible to climb them, the trees seemed to be trying to throw the children off.

It was a dull gray afternoon and the shivering boys and girls had slipped off the branches so often that they were discouraged, and were huddled around trying to get warm by slapping each other and scolding hard.

Jack ran up to them—smiling!

They stared at him in surprise and some of the older boys began to laugh—scornful, taunting laughs.

"He is crazy," they said. "Who ever saw a face like that?"

For answer Jack took his knife out of his pocket, cut a twig from one of the dry apple branches, made some holes in it, put it to his lips—and began to play! The first notes were like a clear, sweet bird's call. There had been no birds near the village for many years and the sound was so new, so startling, that the children sprang to their feet.

Then the music changed. It grew gayer and sweeter until it was the same tune from Fairyland that the elf had played. In spite of them-

selves, the children began to smile, then to laugh, to clap their hands, to dance!

Such a sight had never been seen in the village before! On and on Jack played, the trees began to quiver, to shake, to grow, until their trunks were straight and then—green leaves unfolded, buds appeared and opened in all their beauty, soft grass crept up to the trunks and there, in the most perfect orchard this side of Fairyland, Jack played while the children danced and capered for joy.

When his music was at the gayest, when the children felt they could almost fly for joy, Jack —disappeared!

Whether he flew away or vanished into the apple blosoms the children could never tell. Only his cap was left lying upon the ground under a tree and he was gone.

Back to the village ran the laughing children, and—well, it took a long, long time for the people of that place to get used to smiles and laughter and gay words. It took just seven years and all that time they had one wonderful picture to look at which helped them to smile. For all those seven years the pink and white blossoms covered the trees, their fragrance filled the air and, whatever the weather in the village, the skies over the orchards were as blue

as a clear spring day. From some trees people might have missed the fruit, but these apples were so small and sour that only the very crossest old man, who stayed cross for nearly all of the seven years, could have grumbled while they looked at the blossoming trees.

Then at the end of the seven years Jack came back! Up the street of the village he walked, tall and splendid and very gay, with a golden cloak around his shoulders, a green cap with a long feather upon his head, and in his hand a flute. As he walked he played and behind him came,—what were they?

"Are they golden leaves fluttering in the wind?" asked the men.

"No, they are golden butterflies or sunbeams," answered the women.

"Ah, no, they are fairies!" cried the children.

And so they were, but only the smilingest people in the village could see them clearly. Jack led by his music and it was the most bewitching music that you ever heard. The golden fairies came flying after him, the children joined them,—running, skipping, capering,—and the grown people all followed, dancing in spite of themselves. Even the cross old man began to smile and hobble after them.

On down the street, past the fountain, around the corner, up to the apple-orchards, walked Jack, with the gay procession after him. Beside the blooming trees he stopped a moment, whispered an order to the fairies and began another tune upon his flute, a mysterious little tune like branches whispering to the breezes, or streams singing to the ferns.

As he played the fairies flew among the blossoms, touching them with their wee fingers, and the petals began to fall like snowflakes upon the grass. Then where the blossoms had been tiny green apples appeared which grew, while the astonished people gazed, until they became the most splendid red and gold apples you can imagine. With gales of laughter the children picked up the apples which fell, and laughing, eating, dancing and singing the whole village gathered around Jack and lifted him high in the air.

"Will you play your magic music and summon the fairies for us every day now?" they asked.

For answer Jack snapped his flute in two.

"You do not need my flute to bring you magic now," he said. "It is all in your hearts. The fairies will come whenever you need them. Not at strange seasons perhaps, turning blos-

soms into fruit in a few moments, but they will be here in autumn leaves and snowflakes as well as in sunshine and blossoms. And while we see them and laugh with them, why,—Fairyland is not more wonderful than our village!"

With one last gay call the fairies rose in the air. Through the twilight they gleamed like fire-flies. Were they really fairies?

Oh, but the people of that village knew! And because they saw the fairies as fire-flies or moonbeams, butterflies or blossoms, the magic which the flute had brought from Fairyland never left them. If one of them sometimes felt the magic slipping from him he hurried to the orchard, cut a twig from one of the trees and made holes in it, like a flute. Then, awkwardly at first, he began to play upon it, but as the magic came back to him the music would ripple out like the budding of blossoms, the whistles of birds, the music of Fairyland.

We might try that too unless we have so much laughter and magic in us that we can see fairies without the flute. Can you?—And you?—Ah, look behind you—there!

X

THE GUNNEWOLF

ADAPTED BY WILHELMINA HARPER

THERE was once a little girl who lived with her mother very close to a dense jungle. Each day the mother would caution Little Girl to be most careful and never enter the jungle, because—if she did—the Gunnewolf might get her! Little Girl always promised that she would never, never even go near the jungle.

One day the mother had to go away for a while. Her last words were to caution Little Girl that whatever else she did she must keep far away from the jungle! And Little Girl was very sure that she would not go anywhere near it.

The mother was hardly out of sight, however, when Little Girl noticed some beautiful white flowers growing at the very edge of the jungle. "Oh," she thought, "wouldn't I love to have some of those—I'll pick just a few."

From *Story Hour Favourites*, by Wilhemina Harper. Copyright, 1918, by the Century Co., New York.

Then, forgetting all about the warning, she began to gather the white flowers, all the while singing happily to herself, "Kum-kwa, khi-wa, kum-kwa, khi-wa."[1]

All of a sudden she noticed, a little further in the jungle, some beautiful yellow flowers growing. "Oh," she thought, "I must surely gather some of those, too!" On she tripped, farther into the jungle, and began picking the yellow flowers, all the while singing happily, "Kum-kwa, khi-wa, kum-kwa, khi-wa."

When she had her arms full of white and yellow flowers, she peeped a little further, and way in the middle of the jungle she saw some beautiful purple flowers growing. "Oh," she thought, "I'll take just a few of those, and what a pretty bouquet I'll have to show my mother!" So she gathered the purple flowers too, singing to herself all the while, "Kum-kwa, khi-wa, kum-kwa, khi-wa,"—when suddenly—up rose the Gunnewolf! He said, "Little Girl, why for you move?"

Tremblingly she answered, "I no move."

The Gunnewolf said, "Then you sing that guten sweeten song again!" So she sang, "Kum-kwa, khi-wa, kum-kwa, khi-wa," and

[1] These words are sung and motion of flower-picking imitated.

then—the old Gunnewolf nodded his head and fell fast asleep.

Away ran Little Girl as fast as ever she could,—pit-pat, pit-pat, pit-pat, pit-pat, pit-pat, pit-pat.[1]

Then the Gunnewolf woke up! Away he ran,—hunker-cha, hunker-cha, hunker-cha, hunker-cha,[2] until he caught up to her; and he said, "Little Girl, why for you move?"

"I no move," she answered.

"Then you sing that guten, sweeten song again!"

Timidly she sang, "Kum-kwa, khi-wa, kum-kwa, khi-wa"; then the old Gunnewolf nodded, nodded, and went sound asleep.

Away ran Little Girl just as fast as ever she could,—pit-pat, pit-pat, pit-pat, pit-pat, pit-pat; and again the Gunnewolf woke up! Away he ran—hunker-cha, hunker-cha, hunker-cha, hunker-cha; pit-pat, pit-pat, pit-pat; hunker-cha, hunker-cha, until he caught up to her and said, "Little Girl, why for you move?"

"I no move."

"Then you sing that guten, sweeten song again."

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[1] Indicate with motion of two fingers of one hand, fast running of Little Girl.

[2] Indicate with motion of two hands, fast leaps of Gunnewolf.

So she sang, " Kum-kwa, khi-wa, kum-kwa, khi-wa," until the old Gunnewolf again nodded, nodded and fell asleep.

Then away ran Little Girl—pit-pat, pit-pat, pit-pat, pit-pat—until she came almost to the edge of the jungle!

Pit-pat, pit-pat, pit-pat, pit-pat,[1] until she got away out of the jungle!

Pit-pat, pit-pat, pitty-pat, pit-ty-pat,[2] until she reached her very own door.

From that day to this, Little Girl has never, never gone into the jungle.

[1] Indicate running steps more slowly.
[2] Indicate running steps still more slowly.

XI

THE FAMILY TOO LARGE FOR THE PIE

By Edmund Vance Cook

WHEN the Princess Sugartart was about to come of age, it became a grave problem as to whom she should marry. Her father was inclined to favour the suit of King Candysticks, a tall, plain fellow of rather common appearance. Her mother wished her to marry the Duke of Dumplings, a fat, thick, heavy chap, with an unhealthy complexion. The Prime Minister suggested the Baron Bonbon, a somewhat sweetish and effeminate youth of a neighbouring kingdom.

But the Princess Sugartart declared she would only marry one whose tastes were the same as her own, so that she and her husband would never have to disagree or quarrel. So, whenever anyone came asking for her hand in marriage, the Princess asked to see him alone

From *The Story Club*, by Edmund Vance Cooke. Copyright by Dodge Publishing Co., New York.

for one minute, that she might ask him an important question. She declared that if the suitor answered it to suit her she would marry him. If he gave the wrong answer, his chances were at an end.

The King of Candysticks answered carelessly, "Oh, any kind, I guess," and he was rejected as not being particular enough.

The Duke of Dumplings answered surlily, "No kind," and he was refused as being too disagreeable.

The Baron Bonbon answered eagerly, "All kinds," and he was turned away as having no taste of his own.

It happened that a strange Prince was passing that way, a jolly fellow, eager for adventure, and hearing that the Princess Sugartart was in need of a husband, he cried, "I believe I am just the fellow." When he was told of the mysterious question which the Princess insisted upon putting, he said, "Very well; let her ask me what she will, and she shall have my truest answer."

So the Prince was admitted and was introduced to the Princess. And the Prince bowed low, but under his lashes he looked at the Princess and thought what a charming maiden she was. And the Princess courtesied, but

looked from under her lids and thought what a fine young fellow the Prince was—not exactly handsome, she thought, but just *good*-looking.

Then the Princess put her famous question. "What," she asked, with a little hesitation for fear he should answer wrong, "what kind of pie do you like?"

"Apple pie," cried the Prince, quick as thought.

The Princess clasped her hands, and asked eagerly, "Dried or fresh?"

"Fresh, of course," answered the Prince.

"Red or green?" asked the Princess.

"Green!" cried the Prince. Then the Princess stretched her hands out to him joyfully, and asked: "What is your name, gracious Prince?"

And the Prince took her hands in his and kissed them, and answered, "My name is Prince Pietooth."

. . . . .

So they were married and lived all by themselves in a little palace which had all the conveniences of a flat, and every morning the Prince would take his basket and go to market and buy some apples, red ones to eat and green ones to cook; and every day the Princess would

bake a pie for dinner, and he would eat half and she would eat half; and I should like to add that they lived happily ever afterward—but they didn't.

Because, after they had been eating pies together quite a while, a baby Prince came to live with them, but before he came the Princess Sugartart wasn't very well, and couldn't make the daily pie, so they had to have a cook, and they found a very good cook indeed, and continued to have pie every day, and I should like to add that they lived happily ever afterward—but they didn't.

Because, one day Norah, the cook, came to the Princess and said, "Plaze, mum, Oi'm goin' to l'ave."

"Going to leave!" exclaimed the Princess. "Why, Norah, why do you want to leave? Don't we pay you enough, and don't we treat you well?"

"Yis, mum; the pay is all r-roight, and yez trate me like a lady, but it's afther l'avin' Oi am nixt Chuesday."

"But why, Norah?" persisted the Princess.

"Well, mum, it's because Oi don't like the poi."

"Don't like apple pie!" cried the Princess. "But what kind of pie *do* you like?"

"Ploom poi," answered Norah.

"Oh, very well," sighed the Princess. "I have no doubt a change will do us good."

So every day Norah baked a plum pie for dinner, and the Prince had a third and the Princess had a third and Norah had a third, and I wish I could say that they lived happily ever afterward—but they didn't.

Because, when the baby Prince came, they had to have a nurse, who went around the house in a striped gown and a white cap and apron, and the baby Prince liked her very much, but after she had been there quite a while she said to the Princess one day, "Vell, Meeses Brincessin, I t'ink dhe papy is peeg enough now zo dhat I to leafe can."

"Oh, but, Gretchen, I don't want you to leave," said the Princess.

"Vell, I t'ink I shall to leafe haf to must, joost dhe same."

"But why, Gretchen?"

"Vell, I do it not to say like to vant, but dhe bie, de bloom bie, I do it not to like very well."

"Oh!" said the Princess; "but what kind of pie do you like?"

"Boomkin bie."

"Very well," said the Princess. "Norah

has had her plum pie long enough, and we will have pumpkin pie."

So every day they had a pumpkin pie, and the Prince had a quarter, and the Princess had a quarter, and Norah and Gretchen each had a quarter, and I should like to say that each lived happy ever afterward, but, indeed, they did not.

Because a pair of twin Princesses had come to live with them, and the baby Prince was now old enough to have a seat at the table, and everybody was very glad and made the day one of rejoicing, or they would have done so if it had not been for an astonishing and distressing discovery. The baby Prince did not like pie!

Or, anyway, he wouldn't eat the pumpkin pie, which so alarmed his father that he called in the doctor. The doctor listened to the beating of the little boy's heart, thumped his lungs, or rather his chest, and made him say "a" short, with his tongue hanging out. Then he thought a long time and wrote a long prescription, and when Prince Pietooth ran with it to the corner drug-store, the clerk burst out laughing and said, "Excuse me, your Highness, but you've come to the wrong shop. This prescription calls for lemon pie!"

So every day they had a lemon pie, and the baby Prince had a piece, and his papa had a

piece, and his mamma had a piece, and Norah and Gretchen were not forgotten, and I wish I could say that they lived happily ever afterward—but it would not be true.

Because, shortly after this, the twin Princesses grew large enough to have a place at table, and they developed an appetite for cream pie, and because they were the youngest the family humoured them and had cream pie for dinner every day. And not long after that the King died and the Queen came to live with Princess Sugartart and help manage the palace, and as she had always had just what she wanted at home, she ordered the cook to make *prune* pie. But the third day, when the prune pie came to the table, it made everybody terribly cross. The Prince said he *would* be master in his own palace and he *would* have apple pie. The Princess said prune pie made her sick. Norah and Gretchen threatened to leave again, and the baby Prince and twin Princesses cried into the prune pie till it tasted so salty even Grandma Queen wouldn't touch it.

So the pie question became a question of state and was, "If the various members of the family cannot agree on any particular pie, what kind of pie shall they have? And after a great deal of thought the Prime Minister, who was a

very wise old man, answered, "Let each have a little of all and all a little of each. Mince pie!"

So the next day they had mince pie, and in celebration of their peace and happiness they invited the Prime Minister to dinner. All went well until desert, but when the pie was placed before the Prince he cut it across once, and then across sideways, and then criss-cross diagonally and then diagonally the other way, and then he threw up his hands in horror. He had cut the pie four times across, which, everybody knows, is as much as any pie should be cut. The result was that there was one piece for himself, as the head of the family, one for the Princess Sugartart to console her for the loss of her apple pie, one for the Queen Grandmother to make up for her prunes, one each for Norah and Gretchen to keep them from leaving, one for the baby Prince, and a piece apiece to appease the twin Princesses, but—but there was no piece for the Prime Minister!

The family had become too large for the pie!

. . . . .

The Prime Minister was extremely offended, and left in great anger. The Prince was terribly mortified, and the family ate their mince pie amid gloom and confusion.

Now some folks say that it is *not* impossible

to cut a pie into nine equal parts, and that the Prince should have done so, but if you think it is easy, just try it. Other folks say that he should have cut one of the pieces in two, but to whom could he have served these two beggarly bits without insulting them? Certainly not to the Twins, as had been suggested, for they were far more apt to demand a second piece than to accept a half one. Some people go so far as to say that he should have given the Prime Minister his own piece, but that is expecting too much from mere human nature, and, besides, as he was the Prince, it was court etiquette that he should be served first, so how could he?

Grandma Queen finally said that she saw a way out of the trouble. She said she herself would bake a pie the next day which should be large enough for everybody, and the Prime Minister should be specially invited, with the assurance that there would be *pie left*. Accordingly, the next day, after Prince Pietooth had gone to the office and Princess Sugartart had gone shopping, and the baby Prince and the Twins had gone to kindergarten, and Gretchen had gone upstairs for a nap and Norah had taken her afternoon out, Grandma Queen put on her checkered blue apron and started in.

First she telephoned the hardware store to send her a brand-new, clean dishpan of the largest size. Then she ordered a bushel of ripe peaches, and peeled and sliced them. Then she took a sack of flour and made the dough for the crust, and when everything was ready and her oven was hot, she put the pie in.

The first one of the family to come home was Princess Sugartart and as she entered the front door she called, "Why, mother, I smell something that smells like—why, it smells like pie!"

"Shh!" said Grandma Queen; "it *is* pie."

Then the nurse woke up from her nap and came down-stairs and said, "Ach, I choost dhe sveetest dream dhat efer was hadt. Mit sooch a schmell in it! I almost t'ought it was bie!"

And Grandma Queen answered, "It *was* pie."

Then the three children came tearing in, saying, "Oh, Granny, they had to let school out, because we all smelled something that made our mouths water so much the teachers thought we would drown ourselves. It was just like a pie-bakery."

And Grandma answered, "Hush; it is a *pie-bakery.*"

Then Norah came from her afternoon out and exclaimed, "What it is, Oi dunno; but

over beyant in the nixt ward, where I was visitin' the Clanceys, such a smell coom to me that I t'ought it was poi. What is it, do yez tell me?"

Grandma Queen smiled and answered happily, "Whist; it *is* pie."

Then came Prince Pietooth, declaring that there was much talk on the street-cars about a wonderful spicy smell that pervaded the town, and that everybody was telling everybody else that it smelled like—what do you suppose? Like pie!

"Ah, ha!" said Grandma Queen, "*'tis* pie."

The Prime Minister came, too, his nose turned towards the sky and his mouth asserting that heaven had deigned to drench their favoured country in the odours of the Orient. He rather hinted that the credit for this blessing should be given to the country's eminent Prime Minister, and Grandma Queen answered that she quite agreed with him, for was it not the Prime Minister's pie?

And now, once again they sat at the table and discussed the courses one by one, from soup to sherbet, till it was time for the pie. After everything was cleared off the table, there entered Norah and Gretchen, staggering under the weight of the delectable pie. It was

placed before Prince Pietooth, who selected the largest knife in the palace and plunged it in. Bravely he plowed across the crisp crust and through the juicy center. This way and that he cut and slashed, and at last he essayed to lift a wedge out of the huge mass. But, alas! so thick was the pie, so heavy even the smallest slice, that the piece would not hold together. Try as he would, the Prince could not extract the two crusts and retain any fruit between them. At last, in sheer despair, he seized a spoon and dished out the pie in disorderly heaps on the plates.

It smelled like pie, it tasted like pie, even, but it did not look like pie. The Prince turned red with mortification, Grandma Queen buried her face in her napkin, Norah and Gretchen stood silently wringing their hands, the Princess fainted away, and the baby Prince and the Twins cried with three wails in one:

"It isn't a-p-p-p-pie at all! It's a p-p-p-pudding!"

XII

THE GIFT OF THE GNOMES

The Swiss Legend of the Alp Horn

RETOLD BY KATHERINE D. CATHER

IN the days of long ago a chamois hunter, caught in a storm on the mountains, took refuge in a deserted hut. The floor was so wet and cold that to stay there was almost as bad as being out in the rain and hail, and so he climbed into the loft and lay down on a pile of straw.

Just how long he slept he did not know, but after a while he was awakened by the tinkle of bells and the lowing of many cattle. That seemed very strange, for it was almost winter, and Swiss herdsmen drive their flocks to the valley early in the autumn. Yet as he looked out through the tiny window he saw herds on every alp, herds hundreds strong, cropping luxuriant grass that grew out of the snow.

Then he heard a noise below in the hut, and

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peeping down through a knot hole, saw three strange-looking little men. They were warming themselves beside a fire that blazed on the hearth, and by their long green cloaks and red caps he knew that they were gnomes of the Alps.

They were bustling about and seemed to be making cheese. One of them stirred the milk in a big silver kettle, one scurried in and out of the hut bringing fresh milk to add to that which was already cooking, and one fed the fire with moss and dry branches, which piled up out of the earth.

After a while one of the gnomes poured something into the kettle, the second one brought out three golden bowls, and the third blew a blast on a horn that was seven times as large as himself.

Then the hunter heard the sound of cattle lowing nearer and nearer, as if they were drawn by the music of the horn, and a moment later a voice called out, "Come down from the loft, Moni, and taste of the good things in the bowls."

This amazed him, for he was sure they had not seen him, and how could they know his name? But he crept down from his straw pile, as he was bid, and into the room.

"Choose whichever you please," the little man said, "and besides the drink in the bowl you will receive a gift that goes with the liquid of your choice."

The golden bowls stood side by side on the floor, and each one contained a different coloured liquid. One was red, like the wine of Geneva, one yellow as the honey of Zurich, and the third was white like goat's milk. Moni looked from one to the other, deciding which to take. He was hungry from his long tramp over the crags in the storm and needed milk far more than honey or wine, so he choose that bowl and drank greedily.

Then the little gnomes began to dance.

"Ah," the cheese maker shouted, "you have won the Alp horn!"

"Yes," another exclaimed, "and it is a precious gift. You can make other horns like it, and teach the people how to call their herds, which will not stray away and be lost as happens now. Thus the herdsmen will become very prosperous."

"But remember, if you wish to be happy, you must give up chamois hunting, and never again kill a harmless wild creature."

The gnomes disappeared, and with them went the cattle, the kettle, and the shining

bowls. But the horn lay where the little man had dropped it, and as the hunter looked at it he found it was pure silver. Catching it up, he ran down the mountain side to the hut where his sweetheart lived. He told her the story and showed her the Alp horn, and she was very happy; for she never had wanted him to be a chamois hunter, as the life was full of danger, and she loved the poor little animals that he killed. Now he would tend flocks as she did, and they would be happy in the life of herding.

At first the hunter thought he could not change his ways, for he loved to roam over the mountains and bound from crag to crag in pursuit of the fleet-footed creatures, but the promise of the gnomes and the pleas of Heidi persuaded him, and he gathered a herd and tended it all summer.

He made an Alp horn like the one he had received in the hut and gave it to the maiden, and sometimes as they tended their cattle on different sides of the valley, they would call across to each other, and they were happy and contented—until, one evening, he forgot the warning of the gnomes and shot a chamois.

Then he raised his horn to call good night to his sweetheart. But she did not answer. He

blew blast after blast, but only the echoes came back, instead of the sound of the voice he knew and loved. Darkness fell and stars flashed like diamonds above the snowy Jungfrau, and still he called and sought her, but found no trace. The next morning, as he moved with his herd, a boy told him of a strange happening.

"Last night at sunset time I was watching my goats," he said, "and saw a girl standing on the mountain side above her cattle. She smiled as the wine colour of the Alpine glow crept down toward Chamounix, and throwing back her head, sang one of our herd songs. Suddenly she disappeared, but she could not have fallen, and just then an arrow whizzed through the air and fell on the spot where she had been standing."

He took the arrow out of his peasant blouse and showed it to the hunter, who recognized it as his own, the one he had shot at the chamois.

Then Moni remembered the words of the gnomes, and knew that because he had forgotten their warning he had lost Heidi. He burned his arrows and sorrowfully went back to herding, never again to shoot a wild creature of the hills. By day he followed the cattle, and

by night made Alp horns, always thinking of his sweetheart. But he never saw her again. Some of the herdsmen say that she fled in grief because he broke his word to her, and some declare that the gnomes carried her away to an ice palace in a crevasse. But nobody knows. They know only that from that time forth he tended flocks and made Alp horns, until every herdsman in the mountains had one, and because they could keep the cattle from straying and getting lost, they became more prosperous than they had ever dreamed of being.

Since then every peak and valley in Switzerland has resounded to the notes of the Alp horn. Throughout the summer time they are heard around the lakes of Zug and Geneva, and the cattle follow them as the children of Hamelin town followed the music of the piper. They echo along the Jungfrau as the shepherds behind Interlaken call their flocks together, and their weird sweet blasts mingle with the songs of herd girls as they yodle to each other across the ravines. Travelers from every land smile at the sound of them, for one of the charms of going to Switzerland is in hearing the Alp horns; but very few of these strangers know that the mountain people say the reason

the sound is so magical to the cattle is because in the beginning the horn came from the gnomes.

XIII

A CHAT ABOUT THE CLOCK

By J. W. G. Ward

YOU may have heard people speak of a clock as a good one, but do you know what clock-goodness is? The two things are not quite the same.

Of course, a clock has a nice clean face, but then yours is always clean, even though it is not kept under a glass like the clock's. The clock goes on with its work whether anyone is looking or not, but you never want watching, for you always get your lessons done, and you have never to be reminded to do what mother told you. The clock keeps its hands out of mischief, and it never strikes anyone. Even when it strikes the hour, the hands do not do the striking. But I can tell you what they do. They are very wonderful hands, for they can teach us what clock good-ness means.

The hands teach us good behaviour. Twice

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in every twenty-four hours, the hands point straight up and down. That means 6 o'clock, but it means something else. Can you guess what? Straight up and down means we must stand upright in conduct; down-right in duty. We must strive to do the right, and we must do it with our might. Being down-right in duty means working hard at our lessons and never complaining when we have to do something that is hard or unpleasant. But there! You are always like the clock in that!

Those hands teach us to pray, for at the beginning of each day, say one minute past 12 A. M., again at 12 noon, and again at 12 midnight, the clock puts its hands together before its face just like a child saying its prayers. Is that too often? No one says his prayers in the middle of the day? Well, you will find that one brave man used to pray three times every day, although the king had forbidden it altogether. His name was Daniel.

Here is just another thing. They teach us how to be helpful. Twice every twelve hours—at 9:15 and 2:45, you see them stretched out as though they were saying, "Here are two hands willing to do any good we can. We are ready to carry or lift, ready to do a little kindness for anyone, ready for any duty the day

may bring!" And this is the readiness that pleases mother so much. How delighted she would be if you really tried to help her—and did it willingly, too! Just fancy how she would feel if you were to go to her before you went out for that game of which you are so fond and said, "Is there anything you want me to do before I go?" What a light would come into her face!

It is worth trying to be as good as the clock! And you can easily remember what the clock says, for it is:

Hands up and down....RIGHTEOUSNESS
Hands together.....REVERENCE
Hands open wide.....READINESS

And as you are now getting big, you will know that just as the hands of the clock depend on what is going on behind the face, so our hands move according to the heart. "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life."

XIV

THE NORTH STAR

Adapted from a Legend

ONCE upon a time, so long ago that nobody can remember when, a beautiful ship was sailing along under a spanking breeze, with all sails set. The Captain kept it spick and span—the finest ship afloat.

Now, as the ship was sailing along on this fine starlight night, the Captain in his cabin felt a great jolt, then a scrape; and the ship leaned away over, and everything that could slid down to one side. The next minute the ship tilted the other way, and most of the things slid back again, and then the ship went on as before.

The Captain jumped up and put his head out of the cabin window.

"What was that?" he called sharply to the Mate.

"We struck on Porpoise Rock, sir," said the Mate.

"Who's steering?"

"The Quartermaster."

"Well?—he knew the rock was there, didn't he? It's marked on his chart plain enough. There's no excuse, a bright starlight night like this."

"Yes, he knew it," said the Mate; "but he says he didn't make allowance enough for the stars' moving. He says if there were one star only, that he could depend on to be in the same place every night, it would be all right."

"Well, there isn't," said the Captain.

"I know it, sir," answered the Mate. "But you know, yourself, it's confusing to steer by them."

"H'm!" said the Captain. "You go and drop anchor right now. I won't have any more paint scraped off from this ship. Then you come here, and we'll talk it over. Something's got to be done."

"Very well, sir," said the Mate, touching his cap. And a few minutes later the anchor chains slid out; and then the ship lay quiet, rocking gently on the waves, and everybody went to bed except the Quartermaster, the Captain and the Mate. They sat in the Captain's cabin, talking it over, till after midnight.

In the early morning, just before sunrise, the Mate stepped out of his cabin and called,—

"Bos'n!"

"Ay, ay, sir," answered the Boatswain from below. The next minute he stood beside the Mate on the deck.

"Assemble ships!" ordered the Mate.

"Ay, ay, sir," said the Boatswain again. Then he put a whistle to his lips. The sound was so high and clear it seemed as if it must go all around the world! And, before very long, from every direction came a thin little answering whistle.

And then there appeared, one by one on the horizon, little specks that, as they came nearer, showed themselves to be ships of many different kinds.

All the morning long, all these different ships were drawing nearer and nearer, until, just at seven bells, the last one of them hove to. The Flag Ship lay surrounded by fifty-two ships of every kind you ever saw,—but none so fine as she!

Then, from the peak of the Flag Ship, fluttered a string of little flags—red and yellow and white and green; and the little flags said to the captains of the other ships, "Will you please come aboard?" Then from every ship a boat put out. And as fifty-two captains came up the rope-ladder of the Flag Ship and over

the rail, the Captain shook hands with every one and said,—

"I'm glad to see you, sir!"

When the fifty-two captains were on deck, the Captain made a speech; and this is what he said:—"I suppose you wonder why I called you together? Perhaps you noticed where the good new paint is scraped off the bows of my ship?" All the other captains nodded. "That happened last night. We ran on Porpoise Rock. My quartermaster said he didn't make allowance enough for the stars' moving. I've as good quartermasters as any ship afloat, but you know that that kind of thing happens to all of us. The trouble isn't with the man at the wheel, it's just this—he hasn't the right kind of stars to steer by!"

The captains all looked up at the sky, though it was just noon, and then looked at one another; and one of them said,—

"What kind of stars could we have? We have all there are."

"Oh, these stars are all right, but they move about so! Now, we've steered by these stars as long as there have been ships and sailors, and the Star People ought to do something to help us out. I am going to send some one up to them to see if they can't keep one star always

in the same place. Then we could start from that, and know where we were."

"How are you going to get up there?" asked the same captain who had spoken before.

"We'll show you after lunch," said the Captain—"that is, if you all agree?"

"We all agree!" shouted the fifty-two captains.

Then they all went down to the cabin for lunch.

"Now," said the Captain, when they were all back on deck again, "we shall have to borrow your masts and some anchors."

The other captains nodded.

And at that the Captain explained that first they would need twenty-four large anchors to anchor the Flag Ship—twelve on each side, with her own two at the bows,—so she couldn't even wobble.

Then they must draw up all the ships in a long line, and take down the mainmast of every one. And when all the fifty-two mainmasts were lying on the decks, they must splice them all together, the top of one to the bottom of the next one. Then they would have one great tall mainmast that would reach up to the sky.

When the fifty-two captains heard this, they gave three cheers for the Captain of the Flag

Ship. Then away they went to their own ships again.

All the crews were set to work, but it took them all that afternoon and part of the next morning to splice the mainmasts.

Meanwhile, other sailors had brought twenty mizzenmasts to the Flag Ship. And one by one these were carried up her mizzenmast, and each one was spliced to the top of the one below. Then some hoisting tackle was fastened way up at the top; and pulley-ropes were run through it, and carried over the ship and fastened to the great spliced mainmast. And a great many more things were done before they were ready for the hoisting.

Six bells had hardly finished striking when the Mate asked,—

"Are you all ready, Bos'n?"

"Just waiting for Bob Boy to sing the chantey, sir," answered the Boatswain.

And in a minute Bob Boy came. He stood up on a water-cask in the stern; and the sailors all stood ready, in long lines, with the ropes in their hands. Then the Boatswain blew his whistle, and the singing of the chantey began:—

"We have left our happy home,
On the ocean wide to roam."

And the sailors answered:

"Yeo, ho! Away we go!
Round the world and back again.—
Yeo—heave—ho!"

Tom sang ninety-three different verses, and the sailors sang ninety-three different refrains. Every time they sang a refrain, they all pulled together on the ropes; and little by little the great long mainmast rose in the air. On all the other ships the sailors joined in the chantey. There never was a chantey like it since the world began!

At last the mainmast stood straight and tall, its heel on the deck of the Flag Ship, and its top in the clouds. Then everybody went to rest, and waited for it to be quite dark.

When it was time, and the fifty-two captains and the crew were all on deck again, the Captain asked,—

"Whom shall I send up to talk to the Star People?" And the other captains said, very decidedly,—

"You'll have to send an able seaman."

So the Boatswain picked out the very best able seaman there was; he could wrap his leg four times around a rope when he climbed. He stepped out before the captains, and the

Captain of the Flag Ship looked at the Able Seaman and said,—

"You go aloft there; and when you get to the top, you tell the Star People you want to talk to their captain. Do you understand?"

The Able Seaman pulled his forelock and said,—

"Ay, ay, sir"; and the Captain went on:—

"You tell him, we want one star that we can depend on, to steer by. Do you understand?"

The Able Seaman pulled his forelock and said,—

"Ay, ay, sir."

"Then, up you go!" said the Captain; and the Able Seaman went to the foot of the great tall mast, and wrapped his leg four times around one of the ropes, and began to climb. And everybody watched him go up and up, till he was out of sight in the clouds.

And they kept watching, though their necks ached. And before very long they saw a little speck, no bigger than a fly, coming down the great tall mast. The captains could hardly wait.

"What did you find?" asked the Captain.

"A lot of Star People—I don't know who they were," answered the Able Seaman.

"Well,—what did they say?"

"They wanted to know what that singing was, this afternoon."

"But what did they say about the star?"

"I didn't ask them."

"Didn't ask them!"

"No. I came back to ask what to say about the singing. You didn't tell me that."

"Thunder!" said the Captain. "Did you come clear down here to ask me that? You get back as quick as ever you can, and tell them what I said. Of course you're to answer a civil question!"

"Ay, ay, sir," said the Able Seaman; and he climbed up the mast again. And all the captains watched him as before, only their necks ached a little harder.

He was gone a little longer this time, and then back he came.

"Well?" said the Captain.

"I told them it was the chantey. And I asked to speak to the captain, and they said they hadn't any captain." The Able Seaman paused.

"Then what?" asked the Captain.

"Then, I didn't know whom to ask for,—so I—"

"Thunder-ation!" cried the Captain. "Did you come clear down here to ask me that?

You go back,—quick,—and don't you come down again till you finish your errand!"

"Ay, ay, sir," said the Able Seaman; and then he climbed up the mast again. And nearly all the captains watched him, but some who had short necks couldn't watch another minute.

This time he was gone a long time. It seemed forever to the captains. At last he slid down.

"What did they say?"—"Will they do it?"—they asked eagerly. And the Captain said,—

"Now?"

The Able Seaman breathed hard.

"I told them, sir,—just as you said,—and they all talked and talked—"

"What did they say?" asked the Captain. "Will they give us the star?"

"I can't make out," said the Able Seaman. "I guess they were willing, but they didn't seem to know what to do."

The Captain looked around.

"Mate!" he called. "It's no use. You'll have to go."

"Certainly, sir," said the Mate, who had been wanting to go all the time.

So up climbed the Mate, up and up, and higher and higher. When he reached the top

of the fifty-second mast, he rested his elbow on the gilt ball on the top, put his chin in his hand, and was as comfortable as could be.

Now he had time to look about him. And there they were—all the Star People, studded and decked with shining stars. But they were so busy talking among themselves that they hadn't seen him come.

"What's the matter?" asked the Mate; and at that all the Star People jumped and all began talking at once.

"Who are you?" called out one of the Star Men.

"I'm the Mate of the Flag Ship," he answered. "And I want to know what's the trouble. It doesn't seem much to ask for—just one star."

"No," said the Star Man, "it doesn't. But who is going to hold that star? I can't; I have other things to do. Besides, you're used to seeing us move about. Now, if one of us gives up his own place, it will mix you all up."

"That's true," said the Mate. And just as he spoke, something rubbed against his hand—the very softest thing he had ever felt.

He looked down and saw a little bear—but such a little bear! His long fur was a beautiful

blue-gray, and shone as if it had been dipped in moonlight; his eyes twinkled like two little stars; and, queerly enough for a little bear, he had a great long tail.

"Hello, little one!" said the Mate. "What are you doing here?" And he bent down to stroke him.

Little Bear leaned against his leg; and the Mate knew he was saying, as clearly as he could, "O dear Mate, let me take care of the Guiding Star."

"See here," said the Mate to the Star People. "Why don't you let this little chap have it?"

"Little Bear?" said all the Star People at once. Then everybody looked at everybody else and said, "Why not?"

Then one of the Star Ladies took a lovely star from the back of her dress, where it had never been seen by the sailors and wouldn't be missed. And they fastened that star on the very tip of Little Bear's tail.

"There!" said one of the Star Men. "He's fine as a birthday cake! Now, I want to know how you are going to be sure that that star is always in the right place?"

"Easy enough!" said the Mate. "You know where the North Pole is, don't you? Well, all Little Bear has to do is to keep the

star directly over that Pole. And he'll do it," said the Mate.

He laid his hand on Little Bear's head, and he could feel Little Bear answering, "Oh, I will, I will! The North Star shall never wander."

When the Mate reached the deck of the Flag Ship it was almost morning; and all the captains who weren't asleep had such stiff necks they could hardly turn their heads to look at him. He just touched his cap and said to the Captain of the Flag Ship,—

"It's all arranged, sir"; and the Captain took him straight into his own cabin and shut the door.

The next morning every one was as busy as a bee; and by evening all the masts and anchors had been returned, and the ships were ready to sail.

As darkness fell, every crew came up on deck, and every eye was fixed on the Northern Sky. The rose-red faded into yellow, and palest green, and violet; and a few large stars came out, one by one.

Then, faint at first, then brighter and brighter shone the stars of Little Bear. And the Mate knew that Little Bear was at his post! And a great shout went up from all the ships, that must have reached the sky!

And all night long, whenever the sailors looked up at the Northern Sky, the North Star hung over the Pole. And Little Bear swung slowly, slowly around it, watching, watching the ships that were sailing to all quarters of the world.

XV

LEO, THE FAITHFUL

(A DOG STORY)

ADAPTED FROM AN OLD SCOTCH TALE

THERE never was a more faithful watch-dog than Leo, the great big-limbed, heavy-headed mastiff that guarded the Manor House in Oxfordshire. The sound of his deep growl was the terror of all the gipsies and vagrants in the county, and there was a superstition among the country people, that he was never known to sleep. Even if he was seen stretched out on the stone steps leading up to the front entrance of the house, with his massive head resting on his great fore-paws, at the sound of a footfall, however distant, his head would be raised, his ears fiercely cocked, and his tail would stiffen to warn a stranger that his movements were being closely watched.

Strangely enough, this dog had never been a favourite of his master's. The fact that dogs of his breed are useless for purposes of

sport, owing to their unwieldy size and defective sense of smell, had prevented the master from taking much notice of him. He looked upon the mastiff merely as a watch-dog. The dog would look after him, longing to be allowed to join him in his walk, or to follow him when he rode out, through the lanes and fields round his house, but poor Leo's affection received little encouragement. So long as he guarded the house faithfully by day and night, that was all that was expected of him: and as in doing this he was only doing his duty. and fulfilling the purpose for which he was there, little notice was taken of him by any of the inmates of the house. His meals were supplied to him regularly, for his services as insuring the safety of the house were fully recognized; but as the master had not shown him any signs of favour, the servants did not think fit to bestow unnecessary attention on him. So he lived his solitary neglected life, in summer and winter; by night and day, zealous in his master's interests, but earning little reward in the way of notice or affection.

One night, however, something occurred that suddenly altered the mastiff's position in the household, and from being a faithful slave, he all at once became the beloved friend and con-

stant companion of his master. It was in winter, and the man was going up to his bedroom as usual, about eleven o'clock. Great was his astonishment on opening the library door, to find the mastiff stretched in front of it. At sight of his master Leo rose, and, wagging his tail and rubbing his great head against his master's hand, he looked up at him as if anxious to attract his attention. With an impatient word he turned away, and went up the oak-panelled staircase, Leo following closely behind him. When he reached his bedroom door, the dog tried to follow him into the room, and if the master had been a more observant man, he must have noticed a curious look of appeal in the dog's eyes, as he slammed the door in his face, ordering him in commanding tones to "Go away!" an order which Leo did not obey. Curling himself up on the mat outside the door, he lay with his small deep-sunk eyes in eager watchfulness, fixed on the door, while his heavy tail from time to time beat an impatient tattoo upon the stone floor of the passage.

Antonio, the servant whom Leo's master had brought home with him from his travels, and whom he trusted absolutely, was waiting

for his master, and was engaged in spreading out his things on the toilet table.

"That dog is getting troublesome, Antonio," said the man, "I must speak to the keeper to-morrow, and tell him to chain him up at night outside the hall. I cannot have him disturbing me, prowling about the corridors and passages all night. See that you drive him away, when you go downstairs."

"Yes, Signor," replied Antonio, and began to help his master to undress. Then, having put fresh logs of wood on the fire, he wished the master good-night, and left the room. Finding Leo outside the door, the servant whistled and called gently to him to follow him; and, as the dog took no notice, he put out his hand to take hold of him by the collar. But a low growl and a sudden flash of the mastiff's teeth, warned the servant of the danger of resorting to force. He turned away determined to try bribery where threats had failed. He thought that if he could secure a piece of raw meat from the kitchen, he would have no difficulty in inducing the dog to follow him to the lower regions of the house, where he could shut him up, and prevent him from further importuning his master.

Scarcely had Antonio's figure disappeared

down the passage, when the mastiff began to whine in an uneasy manner, and to scratch against his master's door. Disturbed by the noise, and astonished that his faithful servant had disregarded his injunctions, the man got up and opened the door, on which the mastiff pushed past him into the room, with so resolute a movement that his master could not prevent his entrance. The instant he got into the room, the dog's uneasiness seemed to disappear. Ceasing to whine, he made for the corner of the room where the bed stood in a deep alcove, and, crouching down, he slunk beneath it, with an evident determination to pass the night there. Much astonished, the master was too sleepy to contest the point with the dog, and allowed him to remain under the bed, without making any further attempt to dislodge him from the strange and unfamiliar resting-place he had chosen.

When the servant returned shortly after with the piece of meat with which he hoped to tempt the mastiff downstairs, he found the mat deserted. He assumed that the dog had abandoned his caprice of being outside his master's door, and had betaken himself to his usual haunts in the basement rooms and passages of the house.

Whether because the dog was in his room, or from some other cause, the master was a long time in going to sleep that night. He heard the different clocks in the house strike midnight, and then one o'clock; and as he lay awake watching the flickering light of the fire playing on the old furniture and on the dark panels of the wainscot, he felt irritated against the dog, whose low, regular breathing showed that he was sleeping soundly. Towards two in the morning the man must have fallen into a deep sleep, for he did not hear sounds of stealthy steps creeping along the stone corridor and pausing a moment on the mat outside his room. Then the handle of the door was softly turned, and the door itself, moving on its well-oiled hinges, was gently pushed inward. In another moment there was a tremendous scuffle beneath the bed, and with a great bound the mastiff flung himself on the intruder, and pinned him to the floor. Startled by the unexpected sounds, and thoroughly aroused, the master jumped up, and hastily lit a candle. Before him on the floor lay Antonio, with the mastiff standing over him, uttering his fierce growls, and showing his teeth in a dangerous manner. Stealthily the servant stole out his hand along the floor, to conceal something sharp and

gleaming that had fallen from his hand, but a savage snarl from Leo warned him to keep perfectly still. Calling off the mastiff, who instantly obeyed the sound of his master's voice, though with bristling hair and stiffened tail he still kept his eyes fixed on the servant, the master demanded from him the cause of his being in his bedroom at that hour, and in that way. There was so much embarrassment and hesitation in Antonio's reply, that the man's suspicions were aroused. In the meantime the unusual sounds at that hour of the night had awakened the household. Other servants came hurrying along the passage to their master's room. Then the servant became so terrified that he confessed he had entered his master's room with the intention of murdering and robbing him, and had only been prevented by the attack of the faithful dog.

From that day Leo was his master's constant companion and friend. In long walks through the lanes and fields and across the hills and valleys, Leo was always at his side trotting along happily. When the man could not take him with him, he would look for the dog's great head thrust out of the door watching through the darkness for his return.

Among the family pictures the master had placed a full-length portrait of himself with his hand on the head of the faithful dog, and beneath this the legend, " Leo, the Faithful."

XVI

THE KING O' THE CATS

By Joseph J. Jacobs

ONE winter's evening the sexton's wife was sitting by the fireside with her big black cat. Old Tom on the other side, both half-asleep and waiting for the master to come home. They waited and they waited, but still he didn't come, till at last he came rushing in, calling out, "Who's Tommy Tildrum?" in such a wild way that both his wife and his cat stared at him to know what was the matter.

"Why, what's the matter?" said his wife, "and why do you want to know who Tommy Tildrum is?"

"Oh, I've had such an adventure. I was digging away at old Mr. Fordyce's grave when I suppose I must have dropped asleep, and only woke up by hearing a cat's *Miaou.*"

"*Miaou!*" said Old Tom in answer.

From *More English Fairy Tales,* by Joseph J. Jacobs. Copyright by G. P. Putnams Sons, New York and London.

"Yes, just like that! So I looked over the edge of the grave, and what do you think I saw?"

"Now, how can I tell?" said the sexton's wife.

"Why, nine black cats all like our friend Tom here, all with a white spot on their chestesses. And what do you think they were carrying? Why, a small coffin covered with a black velvet pall, and on the pall was a small coronet all of gold, and at every third step they took they cried all together, *Miaou*——"

"*Miaou!*" said Old Tom again.

"Yes, just like that!" said the sexton; "and as they came nearer and nearer to me I could see them more distinctly, because their eyes shone out with a sort of green light. Well, they all came towards me, eight of them carrying the coffin, and the biggest cat of all walking in front for all the world like—but look at our Tom, how he's looking at me. You'd think he knew all I was saying."

"Go on, go on," said his wife; "never mind Old Tom."

"Well, as I was a-saying, they came towards me slowly and solemnly, and at every third step crying all together, *Miaou*——"

"*Miaou!*" said Old Tom again.

"Yes, just like that, till they came and stood right opposite Mr. Fordyce's grave, where I was, when they all stood still and looked straight at me. I did feel queer, that I did! But look at Old Tom; he's looking at me just like they did."

"Go on, go on," said his wife; "never mind Old Tom."

"Where was I? Oh, they all stood still looking at me, when the one that wasn't carrying the coffin came forward and, staring straight at me, said to me—yes, I tell 'ee, *said* to me, with a squeaky voice, 'Tell Tom Tildrum that Tim Teldrum's dead,' and that's why I asked you if you knew who Tom Tildrum was, for how can I tell Tom Tildrum Tim Toldrum's dead if I don't know who Tom Tildrum is?"

"Look at Old Tom, look at Old Tom!" screamed his wife.

And well he might look, for Tom was swelling and Tom was staring, and at last Tom shrieked out, "What—old Tim dead! then I'm King o' the cats!" and rushed up the chimney and was never seen again.

XVII

THE WATER NIXIE

By Pamela Tennant

THE river was so clear because it was the home of a very beautiful Water Nixie who lived in it, and who sometimes could emerge from her home and sit in woman's form upon the bank. She had a dark green smock upon her, the colour of the water-weed that waves as the water wills it, deep, deep down. And in her long wet hair were the white flowers of the water-violet, and she held a reed mace in her hand. Her face was very sad, because she had lived a long life, and known so many adventures, ever since she was a baby, which was nearly a hundred years ago. For creatures of the streams and trees live a long, long time, and when they die they lose themselves in Nature. That means that they are forever clouds, or trees, or rivers and never have the form of men and women again.

From "*The Children and the Pictures*," by Pamela Tennant. Copyright by The Macmillan Company, New York.

All water creatures would live, if they might choose it, in the sea, where they are born. It is in the sea they float hand-in-hand upon the crested billows, and sink deep in the great troughs of the strong waves, that are green as jade. They follow the foam and lose themselves in the wide ocean,—

> "Where great whales come sailing by,
> Sail and sail with unshut eye;"

and they store in the Sea King's palace the golden phosphor of the sea.

But this Water Nixie had lost her happiness through not being good. She had forgotten many things that had been told her, and she had done many things that grieved others. She had stolen somebody else's property—quite a large bundle of happiness—which belonged elsewhere and not to her. Happiness is generally made to fit the person who owns it, just as do your shoes, or clothes; so when you take someone else's it's very little good to you, for it fits badly and you can never forget it isn't yours.

So that with one thing and another this Water Nixie had to be punished, and the Queen of the Sea had banished her from the waves.

The punishment that can most affect Merfolk is to restrict their freedom. And this is how the Queen of the Sea punished the Nixie of our tale.

"You shall live for a long time in little places, where you will weary of yourself. You will learn to know yourself so well that everything you want will seem too good for you, and you will cease to claim it. And so, in time, you shall get free."

Then the Nixie had to rise up and go away, and be shut into the fastness of a very small space, according to the words of the Queen. And this small space was—a tear.

At first she could hardly express her misery, and by thinking so continuously of the wildness and savour of the sea, she brought a dash of the brine with her, that makes the saltness of our tears. She became many times smaller than her own stature; even then, by standing upright and spreading wide her arms, she touched with her finger-tips the walls of her tiny crystal home. How she longed that this tear might be wept and the walls of her prison shattered! But the owner of this tear was of a very proud nature, and she was so sad that tears seemed to her in no wise to express her grief.

She was a Princess who lived in a country that was not her home. What were tears to her? If she could have stood on the top of the very highest hill and with both hands caught the great winds of heaven, strong as they, and striven with them, perhaps she might have felt as if she expressed all she knew. Or, if she could have torn down the stars from the heavens or cast her mantle over the sun. But tears! Would they have helped to tell her sorrow? You cry if you soil your copy-book, don't you, or pinch your hand? So you may imagine the Nixie's home was a safe one, and she turned round and round in the captivity of that tear.

For twenty years she dwelt in that strong heart, till she grew to be accustomed to her cell. At last, in this wise came her release.

An old gipsy came one morning to the Castle and begged to see the Princess. She must see her, she cried. And the Princess came down the steps to meet her, and the gipsy gave her a small roll of paper in her hand. And the roll of paper smelt like honey as she took it, and it adhered to her palm as she opened it. There was little sign of writing on the paper, but in the midst of the page was a picture, small as the picture reflected in the iris of an eye.

The picture showed a hill, with one tree on the sky-line, and a long road wound round the hill.

And suddenly in the Princess' memory a voice spoke to her. Many sounds she heard, gathered up into one great silence, like the quiet there is in forest spaces, when it is Summer and the green is deep:—

> "Blessed are they that have the home longing,
> For they shall go home."

Then the Princess gave the gipsy two golden pieces, and went up to her chamber, and long that night she sat, looking out upon the sky.

She had no need to look upon the honeyed scroll, though she held it closely. Clearly before her did she see that small picture; the hill, and the tree, and the winding road, imaged as if mirrored in the iris of an eye. And in her memory she was upon that road, and the hill rose beside her, and the little tree was outlined, every twig of it, against the sky.

And as she saw all this, an overwhelming love of the place arose in her, a love of that certain bit of country that was so sharp and strong, that it stung and swayed her, as she leaned on the window-sill.

And because the love of a country is one of

the deepest loves you may feel, the band of her control was loosened, and the tears came welling to her eyes. Up they brimmed and over, in salty rush and follow, dimming her eyes, magnifying everything, speared for a moment on her eyelashes, then shimmering to their fall. And at last came the tear that held the disobedient Nixie.

Splish! it fell. And she was free.

If you could have seen how pretty she looked standing there about the height of a grass-blade, wringing out her long wet hair. Every bit of moisture she wrung out of it, she was so glad to be quit of that tear. Then she raised her two arms above her in one delicious stretch, and if you had been the size of a mustard-seed perhaps you might have heard her laughing. Then she grew a little, and grew and grew, till she was about the height of a blue-bell, and as slender to see.

She stood looking at the splash on the window-sill that had been her prison so long, and then, with three steps of her bare feet, she reached the jessamine that was growing by the window, and by this she swung herself to the ground.

Away she sped over the dew-drenched meadows till she came to the running brook,

and with all her longing in her outstretched hands, she kneeled down by the crooked willows among all the comfry and the loosestrife, and the yellow irises, and the reeds.

Then she slid into the wide, cool stream.

XVIII

VASILISSA THE WISE

By Mrs. Burton Harrison

ONCE upon a time there lived a king and queen and the king was very fond of hunting and shooting. Well, one day he went out hunting and saw an eaglet sitting on an oak. Just as he was going to shoot it, the eaglet began to coax him.

"Please don't shoot me, king. Take me home, and see if some day I'm not of use to you."

The king's heart softened, and he took the bird home and fed it. Soon it grew strong and ate so much that every day it had to be supplied with a whole sheep or a cow. In two years the king had neither flocks nor cattle left. At last the eaglet cried, "Now set me free, good master, that I may try my wings."

The king set it free, and it tried to fly. The eagle soared proudly in the air; and then, coming back, invited the king to take a ride upon his back. The king accepted his invitation, and in a moment they were high above the clouds,

speeding past the region of the stars into a land where lived the eagle's family. They visited the eagle's mother and his sisters, who received the king politely, thanking him for his kindness to their boy.

"Now, my king," said the eagle, in a friendly way, "stay a while with me, and afterward I'll give you a ship, and some other presents to repay you for all I ate at your house; then—God speed you home again."

When the time came, the eagle, flew down with the king to the seashore; and there they found a fine large ship. On the deck were two chests; one red, the other green.

"Mind, king," said the eagle in bidding his guest good-by, "you must on no account open the coffers till you get home. Then open the red chest in your field, the green chest in your garden."

The king sailed away over the blue sea till he came to a pleasant island, where he took the red chest ashore, and began wondering what was in it.

"What difference can it make? I'll just have a peep," he said; but no sooner had he lifted the lid, than out poked a cold wet nose, followed by a pair of horns. Then another and another, till there escaped from the chest

such a great number of different kinds of cattle, the island was half full of them in a minute. This made the king feel very sorrowful, for he knew there was no chance of his getting this vast multitude again into so small a space. As he sat there lamenting there came up out of the sea a Merman, who asked him what the trouble was. The king explained, and the Merman promised to help him, on condition that the king should give him whatever he had at home that he knew nothing about.

"Whatever I have at home that I know nothing about," repeated the king. "That seems easy enough, for I fancy I know pretty much all that's there. All right old man. It's a bargain, so set to work."

The Merman blew a shell whistle, and in ten minutes all the cattle had come running up and been stowed within the red chest again.

The king made haste to get his chest aboard ship, and to sail away. When he reached home, what was his joy to hear that during his absence the queen had had a most beautiful little boy. But then the poor king remembered his promise to the Merman, and turned pale. Tears rushed from his eyes when he kissed his baby. To seek distraction from these thoughts, he took his red coffer out into the fields, and, open-

ing it, set free the splendid herd of cattle, which immediately went to grazing peacefully upon his tall grasses. Carrying the green chest into the garden, he next opened that, when, behold! there were trees, and plants and flowers of marvelous beauty such as he had never seen, which, flying from the chest, took root in his soil, making it the most glorious garden in the world. The king forgot his fatal promise, and thought only of enjoying his happy home. Years passed, and one day he was crossing a river when out popped the angry old Merman.

"A pretty king you are, not to keep a promise. Bring me my prize before a day is past."

The poor king went home full of misery, to tell his queen the bad news. They decided that the prince must go; so they took him to the river bank, and left him. While the poor prince stood waiting for his new master to come and fetch him, up came a Baba Yaga, a regular witch of the woods.

"Pray, granny, help me a bit in my trouble," said the prince, pleasantly.

She knew all about it without waiting to be told—a faculty which certainly saves a great deal of wasted breath in this world; and she said: "Well, I like your looks, and I'll help

you; wait here till sunset, and you will see twelve swans fly down, take off their plumage, and go into the water to bathe. Do you steal quietly up and lay hands upon the largest swan's plumage. It belongs to the Merman's daughter, and when once you have got it, she will have to promise you what you ask, to get it back again."

The prince obeyed, and hid behind the bushes. Soon all happened as the Baba Yaga said. The swans, diving into the water, turned into twelve lovely maidens. When they had done bathing, they came out swans again, and each put on her rightful plumage; but the eldest one sought in vain for hers. Who should she be but Vasilissa the Wise, the Merman's eldest daughter. Then the prince spoke to her from behind the bushes.

"I hold your plumage, fair Swan-lady," he said. "What will you give me if I return it to you?"

"I'll help you more than you can imagine," she replied. "I know they are expecting you at my father's house, and will make a slave of you. But never mind. Give me my plumage, and I will lend you my best three servants to attend you."

So the prince gave her the plumage, and at

once she put on her swan's coat and flew away. Out of the wood came three odd-looking fellows, who addressed him as their master. The prince asked their names, and learned that they were called "The Mighty Eater," "The Mighty Drinker," and "Freeze-em-out," respectively.

"You must be rather an expensive lot to keep," he said; "however, hurry up now, and take me to the Merman's palace."

When they reached the palace the Merman was growling furiously.

"You've taken your time to come to me," he said. "Here, set to work at once. Your first task is to build me, in one night, a great crystal bridge, that the whole court may pass over on the morrow. If you don't build it—why—off goes your head—that's all!"

The prince went out into the garden and burst into tears. Vasilissa the Wise, combing her golden locks at an upper chamber window of the palace, saw him and cried out, "What ails you, prince? Tell me your trouble."

"Ah, Vasilissa," said the prince, "your father means to murder me, it is clear. How can I ever build, in a single night, a crystal bridge over which the whole court may pass upon the morrow?"

"Bah! is that all?" said Vasilissa the Wise. "Lie down and sleep on it. Remember the morning is wiser than the evening!"

The prince obeyed her, and at midnight out rushed Vasilissa from her chamber, and stood on the river bank. She uttered a mighty whistling cry; from all sides there came running artists and workmen fetching tools and bricks of glass. In the twinkling of an eye arose a beautiful crystal arch, graven with strange devices; and the workers went away as fast as they had come.

Early next morning Vasilissa the Wise awoke the prince. "Get up, prince. The bridge is ready, and my father will soon be coming to inspect it."

Up jumped the prince, full of joy, taking a broom in his hand, pretended to be sweeping the bridge as if he had just finished it.

Soon came along the angry Merman.

"What's this!" he said, in surprise. "Well, you are good for more than I thought assuredly. Now for your second task. Plant me by tomorrow a garden green—a big and shady one. There must be birds singing in the branches, rare flowers blossoming in the borders, and from every bough must hang ripe luscious fruit."

Again the prince went off to Vasilissa, telling her his woes.

"Pooh! That's nothing. Lie down and sleep. Don't you know the morning is wiser than the evening?" said she.

The prince lay down and slept. At midnight, Vasilissa the Wise rushed out from her chamber and stood on the river bank. She uttered a mighty whistling cry, and from all parts there ran gardeners and laborers, who carried plants and seeds and blooming flowers. In the twinkling of an eye they had made a beautiful garden, where birds of gay plumage sang upon the branches, brilliant flowers sprung up in the borders, and luscious fruits hung upon every bough.

Early in the morning Vasilissa the Wise awoke the prince. "Get up, prince. The garden is ready. My father is coming out to inspect it."

The prince ran into the garden, and, picking up a broom, swept the paths neatly.

Soon came along the astonished Merman.

"Better and better!" cried he. "Here, my good youth, you have done me right good service and deserve a rich reward. Go, choose yourself a bride among my twelve daughters. They are all exactly alike in face, in hair and in

dress. If you can pick out the same one three times running, she shall be your wife; if you fail, off goes your head!"

"Never mind," whispered Vasilissa the Wise; "if I be the one you would choose, the first time I shall wave my handkerchief, the second time I shall be arranging my dress, the third time you will see a fly above my forehead."

Thus it was that the prince contrived to guess Vasilissa the Wise three times running. There was nothing for the old Merman but to submit, so the wedding came off in fine style. The feast prepared for the young couple was more than a hundred men could eat.

"I wish you a good appetite, son-in-law," said the Merman, with a malicious grin. "Eat all you want, but if anything remains over, off goes your head!" And with that he departed, leaving them alone.

"Call for the Mighty Eater," whispered the bride to her husband. In came the prince's servant, and, when they ordered him to help himself, the victuals vanished like smoke. When the dishes were empty, the Mighty Eater looked anxiously about for more, as he went away.

Returning presently, the Merman set out

about forty tubs of strong drinks of every kind, ordering his son-in-law to drain every one of them dry, on pain of losing his head. And with that he departed again, leaving them alone.

"Call now for the Mighty Drinker," whispered Vasilissa the Wise. In came the Mighty Drinker, and, in a flash, every tub was emptied to the dregs. But when the Merman came back again and found this out, he fell into a spiteful rage.

"My son-in-law must need a hot bath," he said to his servants. "Heat the bath room, until it is red-hot; do you hear?"

And the iron bath-room was made so hot that you could not come within ten feet of it. Twelve loads of firewood were poked into the stove.

"Call for Freeze-em-out, and send him into the bath-room first," whispered Vasilissa the Wise to her husband.

This was done; and, when Freeze-em-out had opened his mouth and blown a single blast into that burning heat, in a moment the air became bitterly cold, and icicles were hanging on the bath-room stove, while you might have skated on the floor, which was a shining sheet of ice.

By this time Vasilissa the Wise made up her mind that it was best to take her young hus-

band away, out of her wicked father's power. So the two saddled their horses and galloped off into the open plain, and rode straight to the palace of the king and queen, who were still bitterly lamenting the supposed loss of their darling son and heir.

The prince presented to them Vasilissa the Wise, and great was their joy to find that their son was alive and well, and had won for himself a beautiful and clever bride.

Vasilissa and the prince went on a wedding journey to visit the friendly eagle, who made them many splendid presents, and, after they reached home again, came every year to see them.

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